

# PROCEEDINGS

AND

# DEBATES

OF THE

## M. E. General Conference,

Held in Indianapolis, Ind.

1856.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

INCLUDING THE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE NORTHERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE AND EXTRACTS FROM THE BISHOP'S ADDRESS, AND FROM THE PASTORAL ADDRESS.

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SYRACUSE, N. Y.  
PUBLISHED BY L. C. MATLACK,  
125 South Salina Street.  
1856.

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COLLEGE  
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PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

HELD AT

INDIANAPOLIS, IND. MAY, 1856.

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**FIRST DAY.**—The Conference assembled in the State House May 1, 1856. The religious services were introduced at 9 A. M. precisely, by Bishop Waugh. He read the 46, 47, and 48th Psalms. This was followed by singing the hymn which commences,

“Except the Lord conduct the plan;”

The Senior bishop, (Waugh,) then offered prayer.

Bishop Morris read a portion of Paul's letter to Timothy.

The Conference then sung the hymn beginning thus :

“Jesus the name high over all.”

Prayer was offered by J. Porter, of New-England, and Father Young, of Ohio.

Bishop Waugh suggested that two or three brethren, who had been Secretaries of General Conferences, be called on to attend to the making up of a roll. It was moved to appoint J. M. Trimble, Secretary pro tem. This caused a long discussion on the question, “can we vote on any question before being organized, so as to know who are voters?” Dr. Durbin proposed to have the Bishop vary his suggestion so as to have Bro. Trimble invited also. J. A. Collins thought

it strange that Sargent, who was not a Secretary in 1852, should be named by the bishop, and Bro. Trimble omitted.

The Bishop remarked that it was an incidental omission, but to relieve the Conference from embarrassment, he would withdraw the suggestion.

H. Bangs moved, and J. A. Collins seconded the motion, to elect J. M. Trimble secretary pro tem. The discussion was renewed, and more time wasted. Something was said about precedent and usage.

"The brother's mistaken," exclaimed Peter Cartwright;—"our usage is this, and has ever been. We always load a thirty-six pounder to the very muzzle to shoot at a mouse?"

J. M. Trimble was chosen Secretary pro tem. And B. Griffen was chosen assistant. The certificates were read, and the list was made out:

#### DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE, 1856.

ARKANSAS.—A. Bewley, M. Robertson.

BLACK RIVER.—A. J. Phelps, Hiram Mattison, G. Baker, I. S. Bing-ham, James Erwin, F. H. Stanton, P. D. Gorrie.

BALTIMORE.—John A. Collins, Henry Slicer, Samuel V. Blake, N. J. B. Morgan, A. Griffith, Norval Wilson, Aquila A. Reese, William Hamilton, John S. Martin, Thomas B. Sargeant, John Lanahan, John Poisal, William Hirst, Mayberry Goheen, B. N. Brown.

CALIFORNIA.—John D. Blain, Samuel D. Simonds.

CINCINNATI.—W. Young, J. B. Finley, W. Nast, J. W. Fowble, G. W. Walker, A. Brown, C. Brooks, A. Lowrey, M. Dustin.

EAST MAINE.—Loren L. Knox, Caleb D. Pillsbury, George Pratt, Luther P. French.

ERIE.—Calvin Kingsley, Samuel Gregg, H. Kingsley, J. Flowers, M. Hill, W. F. Wilson, G. B. Hawkins.

EAST GENESEE.—Wm. Hosmer, Calvin S. Coates, F. G. Hibbard, J. Watts, John Dennis, J. Dodge, D. D. Buck.

GENESEE.—Thomas Carlton, R. L. Waite, L. C. Kingsley, C. D. Burlingham, Israel Chamberlayne.

INDIANA.—B. F. Crary, W. C. Smith, James Hill, H. S. Talbott.

IOWA.—J. Brooks, H. W. Reed, J. G. Dimmitt, L. W. Berry, D. Worthington.

ILLINOIS.—P. Cartwright, George Rutledge, P. Kuhl, W. D. R. Trotter, H. Wallace, W. H. Buck.

KENTUCKY.—S. F. Conrey, A. J. Triplet.

MAINE.—Stephen Allen, Daniel B. Randall, Aaron Sanderson, Wm. F. Farrington.

MICHIGAN.—J. V. Watson, E. H. Pilcher, J. K. Gillett, W. H. Collins, R. Sapp, W. H. Rockway, David Burns.

MISSOURI.—J. H. Hopkins, J. M. Chivington.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.—Richard S. Rust, Warren E. Evans, Newell Culver, Charles N. Smith, James Thurston.

NEW YORK.—D. W. Clark, Phineas Rice, Abiatha M. Osbon, Benjamin Griffin, Morris D. C. Crawford, Seymour Vandusen, John B. Beach, Lucius H. King, Jarvis Z. Nichols.

NEW YORK EAST.—Edwin E. Griswold, James Floy, John Kennaday, Heman Bangs, James H. Perry, John M. Reid, John B. Merwin, William C. Hoyt.

NORTHWESTERN INDIANA.—J. M. Stallard, G. M. Boyd, J. L. Thompson, Wm. Graham.

NORTH OHIO.—W. L. Harris, E. Thompson, J. H. Power, J. Wheeler, W. B. Disbro, Adam Poe, H. E. Pilcher, L. B. Garley.

NORTH INDIANA.—S. C. Cooper, O. V. Lemon, G. W. Bowers, H. N. Barnes.

NEW ENGLAND.—Miner Raymond, William Rice, James Porter, Lorenzo R. Thayer, Loranus Crowell, Thomas Marcy, Daniel K. Banister.

NEW JERSEY.—John McClintock, George F. Brown, Jefferson Lewis, S. Y. Monroe, John S. Porter, Isaac N. Felch, John S. Swaim, Wm. A. Wilmer, John L. Lenhart.

ONEIDA.—Charles Blakesley, David W. Bristol, C. Starr, Elias Bowen, A. J. Dana, William Reddy, Isaac Parks.

OREGON.—Wm. Roberts, Thos. H. Pearne.

OHIO.—Z. Connell, J. M. Trimble, S. Howard, J. M. Jamieson, J. Young, U. Heath.

PITTSBURGH.—Isaac N. Baird, Wm. Cox, James Hender-

son, W. F. Lauck, John Moffet, R. Boyd, John Parker, Samuel Wakefield.

PHILADELPHIA.—John P. Durbin, Pennel Coombs, William Cooper, James Cunningham, Thomas J. Thompson, Wm. McCombs, Francis Dodgson, George R. Crooks, Thomas J. Quigley.

PROVIDENCE.—D. Wise, S. W. Coggeshall, P. T. Kenney, G. M. Carpenter, E. B. Bradford, W. Livesey.

ROCK RIVER.—L. Hitchcock, G. L. Mulfinger, J. Luccock, H. Summers, H. Crews, R. Haney, J. Morey, John Dempster.

SOUTHEASTERN INDIANA.—F. C. Holliday, E. G. Wood, J. A. Brouse, John Kisling, C. W. Ruter.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS.—John Vancleve, James Leaton, J. B. Corrington.

TROY.—William Griffin, D. P. Hulburd, B. M. Hall, Zebulon Phillips, Andrew Witherspoon, Henry L. Starks, Stephen D. Brown, Sanford Washburn, Stephen Park.

VERMONT.—W. J. Kidder, A. G. Button, A. Webster.

WESTERN VIRGINIA.—James Drummond, Gideon Martin, Gordon Battelle.

WYOMING.—George Peck, G. P. Porter, W. H. Pearne, H. R. Clarke.

WISCONSIN.—P. S. Bennett, I. M. Leihy, E. Cooke, C. Hobart, E. Yocum.

The Secretary pro-tem, announced that there were now present, 205 delegates.

The election for Secretary was then attended to. Tellers were appointed. Whole number of votes reported, 206. Necessary to a choice, 104. W. L. Harris of North Ohio Conference, had 113 and was declared chosen.

The Western Book Agents were authorized to publish the *Daily Advocate*, and furnish the members of the Conference, copies gratis. Adjourned to meet at 3 P. M.

*May 1—Afternoon Session.*—The opening exercises were conducted by Heman Bangs. Bishop Morris presided. After the minutes of the morning session were read, the Conference proceeded to elect, by ballot, three assistant Secre-

taries. B. Griffin of New York had 178 votes. S. D. Simonds of California, had 125 votes. J. S. Martin of Baltimore, had 115 votes. These three were declared elected.

Voted : that there be one from each Conference nominated by the respective delegations, to constitute the following committees—which shall elect their chairmen on Episcopacy ; Itinerancy ; Boundaries ; Book Concern ; Slavery ; Education ; Tract Society ; Sunday Schools.

Committees were ordered on Missions ; Temperance ; Bible cause ; Revisals and unfinished business ; Temporal Economy ; Ways and Means ; Rules of proceeding ; Pastoral Address ; Colored Membership.

The appointment of a Com. on Slavery was not provided for with the others. It was added on motion of James Porter. As each Committee was ordered by special vote, and this was named after the others, Mr. Porter was called on to state the object of this Committee. He said that at the last General Conference nothing was done on that subject. Our proceedings passed off in perfect quietness on that theme, until the last day. And then we had an unfortunate explosion which is remembered to this day, and the effects of which will continue much longer. We wish that matter to be taken in hand the first day rather than the last. I do not indicate any specific sentiment, or favor any particular measure by this motion. Nor will the Conference by providing such a committee commit itself to any course of action. We will only say that, the subject of Slavery is a proper one to come up for consideration here. A subject which is now agitating the church and the State, generally demands our attention. I hope the Committee will be appointed and that they will take time to consider it in all its bearings, and give us a Christian Gospel report which shall meet the case and be satisfactory to all concerned.

Heman Bangs favored the motion. If their report did not suit us we can reject it. If we cannot reject it we will do the best thing we can about it.

J. A. Collins wished to explain the fact alluded to by Mr. Porter. Said he, " I introduced the subject at our last session at the close. But it was not on my own motion. I had been telegraphed from Baltimore twice on the subject, and deemed my duty to do and say what I did at the request of

others. But I will not oppose the motion for a Committee on Slavery."

"Let's have the Committee"—was heard from several members. "Let us have the question, Bishop," said Henry Slicer.

A German member was provided for, to be added to the Committees on Boundaries, Book Concern, and Missions.

It was voted that nine shall be a quorum of each of the large Committees.

The motion to appoint a Committee on "colored people" was made by J. A. Collins, in connection with Porter's motion, respecting slavery. Mr. Collins had in his possession, a memorial from the colored people, asking for a correction of evils they were suffering from the neglect of the church. He deemed it of pressing importance.

Notices of delegation meetings were given out, and the Conference adjourned.

## SECOND DAY.

*May 2—Morning Session.*—Bishop Janes presided. After reading the minutes of yesterday, Mr. Hodgson expressed his dissatisfaction at the relative position of the provision of a committee on slavery. He had voted for it : but he now regretted, that it was allowed to occupy so important a position among matters which were properly institutions of the Church. He would like it better if put in some other corner. Another replied that they had the subject recognized in the Discipline by a section on slavery, and therefore—

Just here "order" was called for, and the Bishop decided that it was not now in place to discuss that as Dr. Hodgson had only made a suggestion and no motion was before them.

A plan was proposed to arrange seats by lot, each delegation drawing one number for the whole. It was discussed at intolerable length and rejected. A very foolish, childish, fretful tone characterizing men who ought to show more sense.

The report of the committee on rules was now received and read.

The above gave rise to an extended discussion, on many points. Some of the remarks are noted briefly.

Dr. Durbin doubted the propriety of allowing the mover of a proposition, only, the power to withdraw at his option.

Dr. Hodgson deemed it his right to renew any motion another might choose to withdraw, and therefore deemed it unnecessary to guard this point further.

The rule for previous question elicited quite a lengthy, and an interesting discussion.

H. Slicer wished to permit its application to any question involving character, as in cases of appeal, and the examination of the Bishops' doings.

J. A. Collins opposed the rule wholly. He would not, for the present, have it applied in any case.

H. Bangs laid on severely upon those who would make speeches, use up time and call for previous question. But C. W. Ruter, pointedly replied, that it was not the speech-makers who called for previous question, but those who sat and listened until they were tired out.

J. A. Collins pressed his motion to strike out the rule wholly. He did not know where, nor who, the majorities were. But he was unwilling at the commencement to let any majority have the power to cut off debate when they pleased. He was unwilling to put on a straight-jacket so soon, or become subject to a gag law process.

H. Matteson favored the amendment to except character, but he thought it best to adopt the rule now, rather than to wait until the supposed necessity for it should arise. Then, it would not be so easy to get it, nor so agreeable in its application. Provide for it now and use it when we are in need of it. So he thought.

N. Wilson did not want it now. He would wait two or three weeks.

Dr. Bowen did not like the intimations about majorities being likely to prove unjust and oppressive.

E. H. Pilcher would in time of peace prepare for war. They were cool now and could do this thing up now better than when excited by protracted debate.

At this point one rose very deliberately and said, Mr. President, "I move the previous question," which was responded to by pleasant laughter. The rule as amended by Slicer was adopted.

The propriety of providing power to amend a substitute was discussed at length and agreed to. Durbin urged it by saying, that he had once seen the General Conference tied

up for weeks, he would not say where nor when, nor on what occasion, for want of power to amend a substitute. And we were compelled to vote for a substitute with which we were not satisfied simply because we were compelled to, under our rules, as then in force.

Dr. Kennedy alluded to the courtesy by which they had been permitted the use of the State House. As we cannot reciprocate in any way this action, toward the whole people of the state of Indiana, he proposed as an expression of their sense of the favor enjoyed—That his Excellency the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House, be invited to take seats within the bar of the Conference.

C. W. Ruter moved and it was voted that the Bishops be requested, if convenient to them, that their quadrennial address, be delivered to the Conference to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock. H. Bangs moved, and it was agreed that when a petition or memorial is presented by a member, he shall specify to what committee he wishes it referred, whereupon, if there be no objection it shall be so referred without debate or vote.

Dr. Hodgson proposed that a committee of three be appointed to wait on the Rev. Dr. Hannah and Rev. Mr. Jobson from England, and escort them to the Conference now.

Bishop Janes said, our brethren from England communicated to the Bishops yesterday the fact of their arrival in this city: two of our number are now absent, and are expected every moment in company with the representatives of the English Wesleyan Conference.

Immediately after that, Bishop Baker approached arm in arm with Dr. Hannah, and Bishop Ames with Mr. Jobson. The Bishops on the platform rose to receive them.

Bishop Janes vacated the chair quietly, and Bishop Waugh, the senior Bishop was first to greet them. Being introduced to all the Bishops in the order of their rank, Bishop Waugh addressed the Conference.

"We reach now, at this early period in the proceedings of the session, an item of deep interest. We have now in our midst the honored representatives of the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference. Before the formal introduction of our distinguished visitors it will not be inappropriate for me to offer a few remarks.

"These remarks must be brief. Nor have I the advantage of a studied preparation. It is, so far as I am individually concerned, not a matter of regret that I perform this service without the formality of an address. The impromptu utterances of a full heart seem to me to be the more appropriate words for the interesting occasion.

"We look upon the venerable brother Dr. Hannah, the representative of the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference with feelings of deep interest, from the fact that we were honored by his presence at a session of this body many years ago. He in company with Rev. Mr. Reese, in 1824, attended at the General Conference held at Baltimore during that year. And although most of those now here were not present as delegates nor as spectators; yet a few here will recollect that occasion, and the effective services rendered by Dr. Hannah on that occasion.

"It affords me great pleasure to greet him, again in our midst, as the representative of the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference. We extend to him and to the Rev. Mr. Jobson his companion, our most cordial welcome, and warmest salutation.

"They come to us from our elder brethren of the same church, to extend to us the fraternal salutation of that body. This visit of theirs is an illustration of the maxim long agreed to, that Methodism throughout the world is one. We cordially hail these brethren as the representatives of our elder brethren and assure them of our cordial regard and esteem. You will at the proper time extend to them the formal greeting that is appropriate. I will take pleasure now to introduce to you the Rev. Dr. Hannah." As the Dr. rose, the Conference also stood up. Rev. Mr. Jobson also was presented and received in like manner.

Bishop Waugh.—D. Hannah: Will you choose now to address the Conference or first have your letter of introduction read.—consult your own pleasure.

Dr. Hannah wished the letter of the British Conference read first. After the reading of the letter,

Bishop Waugh then said: The Conference will now be pleased to hear from Dr. Hannah. After that we will be happy to hear from Rev. Mr. Jobson.

Dr. Hannah then expressed his sense of personal honor,

done by the Conference and through the Bishop. It had made him feel quite at home among them, and he prayed for their enlargement and success.

The great object of his visit, was to convey to them the fraternal feelings of their brethren on the other side of the Atlantic.

They rejoiced in the assurance that Methodism was one in its character and aims the world over. In allusion to the difficulties in the Wesleyan body, he assured them that in all that fearful struggle they were glad to know that they had maintained the Discipline and spirit of the institutions of Methodism as they had received them from their fathers. And he trusted that they should always be able to maintain Methodism, unimpaired and entire.

Recently signs of divine favor had appeared, and conversions here and there becoming frequent among them.

The subject of Foreign Missions was adverted to briefly, and represented to be in a state of unusual prosperity.

The relations of Great Britain and the United States were dwelt upon in a very kindly manner, and the hope expressive, that "peace forever" might be continued between them.

The mission of Methodism, English and American, was dilated upon in a very fervid and sanguine style.

He expressed a hope that in all their action at this Conference harmony might prevail in their body, and that hereafter they might witness the most glorious illustration of the prophetic period when the land shall be filled with the light of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

Rev. Mr. Jobson then addressed the Conference. He declared himself to be too much the subject of emotion to do justice to his feelings on the occasion.

He indulged in very complimentary words about the venerated and august body before him. Praised the bishops for their age, service, and sacrifices, and unostentatious manners, &c., &c.

He had been delighted with the country, the people, the churches. Every thing was remarkable to him, and he spoke accordingly.

He spoke of the institutions of Methodism as deserving success from their adaptation to bless the world. But if God was not in it, then did Methodism deserve to fall to

pieces, and he would say let it fall. But it is not so. The mission of Methodism in Europe and in this country is not yet filled up. He thought that it was only in its infancy yet.

In conclusion Mr. Jobson stated a word about the missionary cause among them. He said that in some circuits more money was contributed annually to foreign missions, than was spent in sustaining the interests of the circuit, yet while they meant to continue undiminished, these efforts for the foreign missionary work, they should give more attention to the destitute condition of the people in many parts of the home work.

After thanking them anew for their kind reception and flattering indulgence, he took his seat, assuring the Conference of his deep interest in all their proceedings.

On Motion of J. A. Collins, resolutions appropriate to their appearance were adopted, and the reverend gentlemen invited to take part in all the discussions of the body.

J. Porter moved, and it was voted to refer the address of the British Conference to a committee of five, with instructions to report a reply.

The various Committees provided for by nomination of the various Conferences, were now announced.

#### THIRD DAY.

*May 3d, Morning Session.*—The opening services were conducted by Rev. George Peck.

Bishop Scott presided. After the reading of the minutes, the Bishop called for Reports—none being ready—Petitions and memorials were called for.

#### PRESENTATION OF MEMORIALS.

*New Hampshire Conference.*—By R. S. Rust—one on Slavery—referred. He had others but was not now ready to offer them.

*New York East.*—By J. Floy—one from Allen street church, New York city, asking for a change in the presiding elder's office and work. This he wished read—others of similar character also he had. This memorial was published in the *Wesleyan*. It was read with the signers names who are a majority of the official members of the church.

N. Wilson of Baltimore, proposed to print the memorial in the *Daily*. They would thereby learn whether the in-

terest felt in this subject was local or otherwise. It would afford an opportunity for counter memorials to be sent on in the course of a few days.

P. Rice of New York, said there had been nothing heard by him of any counter memorials.

"I have" said two or three.

A. M. Osbon of New York, opposed the publication of memorials on either side. But, he was sure, that if corresponding exertion had been put forth, they could have secured fifty to one in that region against any change. He hoped that this conference would take no step to arouse and excite the church on this subject. Those who favored any change were a small minority indeed.

H. Slicer, wished the names of the signers published. If in Baltimore we had desired it, 40,000 signers might have been obtained in favor of the present order of things.

W. D. R. Trotter, was anxious that the public should not be mislead and suppose that the people at large were represented by these memorialists.

J. B. Finley, Cincinnati Conference, wished the conference to remember that the present was a time of great excitement in the Methodist family, everywhere. "And" said he, "if that petition printed in our daily, will increase this excitement, I go *"again" it !*" He was sure that it would be an easy matter to create a wide spread and disastrous excitement.

C. Kingsly, thought they had better not be alarmed about so small a matter. He did not think that there was any danger of breaking things to pieces. He had no doubt of the result when the subject came up before them for final action. For his part, when he was willing to have the church divided up into little congregational squads—and he meant nothing disrespectful—then only would he go for such changes in the economy of the church. But as long as Methodism lasts, so long will these arrangements continue as they are.

Peter Cartwright, amid much confusion, without a speech, moved to lay the motion to print, on the table.

J. Kenneday, N. Y. East, favored the printing of both memorial and names. He was in favor of having before the body, all the light that the people desired to have reflected

on that or any other subject. He then briefly presented their views as he conceived them, and complimented the signers highly, specially Mr. Martin. They ought not to be treated as enemies of the church, nor as disturbers of the peace.

The previous question was ordered.

J. A. Collins, said it only related to the motion before the house.

Bishop Scott, deemed the previous question ordered on behalf of the "measure" including all the motions.

Dr. Durbin, regretted to say that he differed with the bishop and appealed. But the chair was sustained.

The conference then by a vote of 113 to 99, ordered the names and the memorial to be printed.

P. Coomb, of Philadelphia Conference, enquired if the names in both memorials were to be printed.

A. M. Osborn, hoped that the names on both would be printed. He characterized the 37th Street Church as one that exists only on paper, like many reputed western cities.

Dr. Peck, Wyoming, deemed the publication productive of mischief. All others must be served the same way or we shall be unjust. And if published, two dailies would not hold the names. Publishing these few names would be putting them up for a gazing stock and the object of public odium. Silent indifference or a direct rejection of their prayer would do even less harm. He spoke very highly of these memorialists.

One whose name I failed to get, said—are we to determine this and other grave questions on the number of names memorializing the conference ; or, upon the merits of the case—"the expediency or safety of the measures proposed."

H. Slicer, made a humorous speech about the butter and cheese, books and jewelry advertised in the daily. He thought that the names of these worthy members would be much more interesting reading matter ! He repudiated the thought of attaching odium to these names. He favored the largest liberty, the right of petition, for men and women too ! Unless, indeed, the petition was like that which cost John the Baptist his head ! He was not willing to throw them under the table, nor stifle them in the committee room, either.

But he wanted the public to see that document. There was something he thought, exceeding rich in one of its arguments. Because forsooth, New Orleans was troubled with the yellow fever, therefore the office of presiding elder should be abolished in New York and Brooklyn. Now, if presiding elders were particularly predisposed to yellow fever, it would be a good argument. That, he thought was decided by risk !

James Porter, had voted against printing. He had no objection to it however unless it be understood as some intimated, as a mark of disparagement. Then that fifty to one will smile in their sleeves and congratulate themselves that they were shrewed enough to keep their names out of the papers. He had been long enough in the minority to know how to sympathize with them. And he would not consent to see them treated otherwise than in the most respectful manner. Don't publish their names in such an association as to point your finger at them and say in effect, don't come here with your radical petitions or we will mark you !

He did not know these brethren, and might oppose every one of these requests, but they shall be treated respectfully. He would now go for adding the names of the signers to the second memorial if the first were published. But he favored reconsideration.

A running fire of short, irregular, disorderly speeches occupied a long time after this.

James Floy reminded the Conference that he had not asked for the printing of names or memorials. He should have been satisfied with the reading merely. But now it was too late to dispose of it in that way. The discussion already had will go ont through the land. He now wished that there would be no reconsideration. Let the action of the Conference stand. He informed the Conference that he had several other memorials of similar character. Twenty or thirty churches in the vicinity of New York, were preparing memorials to be hereafter presented on the same question.

The motion to reconsider prevailed.

Dr. Durbin now proposed that, a declaration be made in snbstance whereas it is now ascertained that numerous memorials will come before ns, both for and against the proposed changes in the presiding eldership, therefore resolved, that the memorial be printed without the names appended.

Various qneries were stated, and confusion prevailed.

The Doctor pressed his proposition.

Floy, questioned whether 'both sides' designed, memorializing the Conference.

"Question, question." "We are all ready," said some. Dr. Kenneday, said we are not ready. That preamble of Dr. Durbin's, states what is not true—it is not true.

Dr. Durbin replied, of course I take that charge kindly, but will Bro. Kenneday point out the untruth.

Dr. Kenneday said it is true so far as the doctor is concerned. But it is not true that I have ascertained, nor that the majority of this Conference have ascertained the facts assumed by him, about numerous memorials.

J. A. Collins said, the conclusion don't follow the premises. There is no connection between them, nor dependence whatever.

The Doctor then withdrew the proposition. The printing of the memorial was then ordered without the names.

The Bishop's address was now read by Bishop Janes. It will be given entire hereafter. 1000 copies were ordered printed in pamphlet form to be distributed pro rata among the members.

The various portions of the Address were now referred to proper committees.

The allusion to Biblical Institutes, or schools for Theological training, was the theme of a spirited debate. It was moved to refer that to the committee on Education. Among the remarks elicited, P. Cartwright said. I am opposed to that reference. The subject was outside of the circle of that committee. It lies in another latitude. He thought that a special committee of one from each An. Conference should be appointed.

N. Wilson, favored a special committee because the question was yet to be settled whether this was to be recognized as an institution of the Church. To send it to the Com. on Education was, to concede that point, and he was not prepared to. He thought that if once the Church established such an institution, it would not be long before there could be no admission to the Methodist ministry except through the Theological school.

Geo. R. Crooks, Philadelphia Conference deemed it discourteous to the committee to take this subject away from

them. He was particularly emphatic, and a little fiery about it, but made a distinct mark.

P. Coomb thought that no reference was had to the subject of theological education when the committee was appointed, and Bro. Crooks ought to be aware of that fact.

Crooks said, "I am not aware of any such thing."

Coomb resumed, "Education with us means quite another thing than theological training."

G. W. Walker, of Cincinnati Conference, dittoed Coomb's views emphatically.

C. Kingsley, argued the qualifications of the committee on Education for this very matter, from the fact that they included among them, those who had charge of such institutions—those who knew the workings of separate departments for biblical study in some of the colleges, and those who knew the views of the various Annual Conferences on the subject.

He was opposed to the springing up of irresponsible schools of the kind, and wished to have them brought under the direct control of the Church.

Wm. Wilmer, New Jersey, said—"I favor the reference of this matter to a special committee, because I perceive that all our professors in Colleges go for its being sent to the committee on Education. That is a sufficient reason for opposing such reference."

W. D. R. Trotter, was in favor of a special committee from the language of the bishops themselves. Besides, he thought that there are too many young men on that committee, to leave so mighty a matter with. It ought to be put in charge of old men of long experience in the itinerancy. The heads of our literary institutions are prejudged in that matter. They all lead off in this direction. Seven of the oldest men in the Conference should compose that Committee. I would not have a man on it who had not grey hairs, and who had not served all his life time in the active work of the ministry.

The motion to refer it to a special committee, failed by a vote of 88 to 203. So it went to the Committee on Education.

#### FOURTH DAY.

*May 5.—Morning Session.*—Bishop Baker presided. On reading the minutes H. Bangs suggested that memorial on

presiding elders from Allen St. Church was not from the membership, nor the church properly, but a part of the officary.

Jefferson Lewis, of the New Jersey Conference, and James Hill of Indiana were chosen Assistant Secretaries.

Dr. Hannah and Rev. Mr. Jobson were invited to preach before the Conference at such time as they might choose upon consultation with the Bishops.

A rule, No. xx was adopted, requiring that a motion to postpone or lay on the table, be taken without debate.

PETITIONS, MEMORIALS AND APPEALS.

W. H. Brockway enquired of the President if it would be in order to offer motions on resolutions during the progress of the call for petitions, &c.

W. H. Pilcher responded affirmatively.

J. Drummond, of W. Virginia enquired, "Is it in order, when a question is put to the President for a member to jump up and answer.

N. Y. EAST CONF.—Jas. Floy presented memorials on the P. Elder question, Green St. Church; 18 official members—from 2d Street Church; 16 o. m.—Sullivan St. Church; 11 o. m.—Ninth St. Church; 13 o. m.—Willett St. Church; 17 o. m.—Asbury Church; 11 o. m.—Cook St. Church, Brooklyn; 7 o. m.—1st Church Williamsburg; 9 o. m. Referred. Also the address of the managers of the Tract Society and a memorial from the Conference respecting the misappropriation of a fund, which had originated when that and the New York Conference were one. The last was referred to a special committee of seven.

Bishop Janes presented a memorial from the New York City Local Preachers' Association. It was read. They asked for district meetings under the sanction and presidency of the Bishop;—and to be protected from the injury suffered by the local ministry, in the return of inefficient and even men of improper character to the local ranks, whom the Annual Conferences were anxious to rid themselves of by location.

It was a very able memorial, and received with favor, a general smile of appreciation lighting up every face at the hit given to the conferences. It was signed T. McFarland and others. Referred, Com. Itinerancy.

VERMONT CONF.—A. Webster presented the following on

Slavery—from East Corinth, by R. Brown and 99 others—East Barnard, D. Wells and 83 others—Wooster, J. House and 35 others—Northfield, E. A. Rice and 43 others.

A. G. Button, from Johnsburg, presented a memorial on Slavery, signed by 25 names.

W. J. Kidder, do. Waitsfield, 62 names—do. Moretown, 81 names—do. Randolph.

BLACK RIVER.—A. J. Phelps, one memorial from Van Buren, Ct., and one from 16 official members of Cato, Ct., asking change in Presiding Eldership.

J. Erwin, on the same subject, from Syracuse by 12 official members.

J. S. Bingham, on the same from Adams, N. Y., one against slavery—65 names—one for extending the time of stationing preachers signed by 15 official members.

WESTERN VIRGINIA.—G. Martin said, "I will now say once for all, that our people want no changes. They are satisfied with the discipline as it is. They only ask that they be permitted to retain the privileges of the church as they now have and enjoy them.

(Removing my desk, I lost some few minutes.)

PITTSBURG CONF.—J. Henderson presented several memorials from different charges against Slavery.

By Wm. Cox, from Mecedon and Bolivar, asking transfer from N. Ohio to Pittsburg Conference.

WYOMING CONF.—Dr. G. Park, a similar request from Bloomingdale, asking transfer from Baltimore to Wyoming Conference.

ERIE CONF.—By G. B. Hawkins, from Cuyahoga Falls, O., for extension of time.

By M. Hill, for revising the formula on Baptism.

ONEIDA CONF.—By Isaac Parker, for Welsh brethren of Utica on their own affairs.

By one whose name escaped me, from Lenox, Ct., a memorial against Slavery by 65 ladies; another of like import from 44 gentlemen, all members of the M. E. Church. (Said one man near me, "The women are ahead" "Yes, when they take hold they push it." "I presume said a third, they do not petition for the privilege of marrying colored husbands." All this in an undertone, indicating the personal feeling of each.)

By Wm. Reddy, from 30 members of the church in Ames,

deeming the Presiding Elder's office indispensable, yet wishing it modified by giving him a pastoral charge, with the duty of attending only such Q. Conference as had before them a trial or an appeal, except that he should attend the last Quar. Conf. on each charge, so as to be present when licenses are to be renewed, or recommendations voted.

OREGON CONF.—By T. H. Pearne, the conference action on Book and Tract Depository, and adding to statistics the number of deceased members and probationers.

By William Roberts, a memorial from the Publishing Committee of the Pacific Advocate at Salem. It set forth that they had a subscription list of 1400, a revenue of \$6,000 and desired to be adopted as a General Conference paper giving therefor sundry reasons.

GENESSEE CONF.—By somebody, a memorial against Slavery from Warsaw, 30 signers.

By Israel Chamberlaine, of the same character from Knowlesville—16 names.

OHIO CONF.—By J. M. Trimble, the conference report on finance—also a memorial in favor of a college of colored youth in the free states. The last referred to special committee of 7.

INDIANA CONF.—By B. F. Crary, conference action respecting the labors of C. Mooth, was referred to the Com. on Missions. The action of the South Eastern Indiana Conference also on the same was referred—another item of conference action on German Missions was referred—and another on boundaries.

N. W. INDIANA.—Conference action on Slavery, referred—and on class meetings; on Chicago book concern, and the Parent book concern.

N. INDIANA.—Conference action on Slavery, referred.

WISCONSIN.—By P. S. Bennet, the action of a Q. Conf. against Slavery—Annual Conference action on boundaries, by C. Hobart.

- ROCK RIVER.—By R. Haney, conference action on boundaries—a memorial from W. J. Smith, relating to Book Concern.

N. OHIO.—By W. B. Disbro, conference action on boundaries and slavery.

By J. H. Power, conference action on finance.

**CINCINNATI CONF.**—By W. Young, conference action on preachers salary and on slavery.

By A. Lowrey, conference action on finance ; and on S. S. Advocate for a Q. C. Also from another, a memorial on the colored college.

**MICHIGAN.**—By E. H. Pilcher, conference action on boundaries and slavery.

The hearing of the appeal of L. D. Harlan, who was expelled for slandering Ex-Bishop Hamlin, was ordered for Thursday morning next.

The change of the place of session was considered and postponed for the present, as the Governor had informed a member that in a few days settees would be on hand to fill the hall and accommodate the Conference perfectly.

C. Hobart, of Wisconsin, obtained leave of absence on account of his wife's illness, and R. Requay, reserve, took his place.

**IOWA CONF.**—The conference action on boundaries and on slavery presented.

**S. E INDIANA.**—By C. W. Ruter, conference action on boundaries.

By F. C. Holliday, a memorial asking that S. S. Superintendants be members of the Q. Conferences. A memorial from preachers of Lawrenceburg District, for increase of salary.

**S. ILLINOIS.**—By J. B. Corrington, a memorial of S. S. Superintendent and Q. Conference—And one on Slavery, against any change, signed by 56 persons—Conference action on slavery.

**ILLINOIS.**—By P. Cartwright, Conf. action on slavery He asked if it was now time to name appeals. If so there was one from D. J. Snow, but he thought likely he had absquatulated !

"No, he's present," said a voice. [Laughter.] And he desires that an early day be fixed. Wednesday, May 7, was agreed to.

To some objections, to hearing appeals now, Slicer said he wished they had about 10 appeal cases in succession. It would have a good moral effect, and prepare the way for adopting the court of appeals we talk of establishing, and very much needed.

**ILLINOIS CONF.**—By W. D. R. Trotter—the action of

Missouri, Ark., Ill., S. Iowa, Iowa Conferences on the subject of the Central Advocate.

MISSOURI.—By J. H. Hopkins, Conf. action on organizing a Kansas and Nebraska Conference—on German work—and boundaries.

ARKANSAS.—One of the two delegates (Robertson or Bewley) rose to say something that nobody could hear, while many laughed at the dumb motions apparently made without any sound proceeding from his face. A second effort informed the Conference that Arkansas was perfectly satisfied.

PHILADELPHIA.—By J. P. Durbin, memorial from board of managers of Miss. Society—both a minority and majority statement from the Conf. Tract Society—and a letter from Bremen, Germany, accrediting Rev. L. S. Jacoby, and asking for Missionary Conference in Germany, and aid in book publishing at Bremen.

BALTIMORE CONF.—By H. Slicer, a request respecting the boundary of the Conference.

NEW ENG. CONF.—By L. R. Thayer, from Ipswich, Mass., against Slavery by 113 names. Whitingham 43. Weston 44.

By M. Raymond, on the same from Townsend, with 15 names—Princeton 21—Greenfield 28. Also Conf. mem. against Slavery—for modifying Presiding Eldership—action on Missions—and various verbal alterations of Discipline.

By Jas. Porter, against Slavery from Roxbury, 30—52 names—and Conf. action on tract Society.

PROVIDENCE CONF.—By. D. Wise, from West Duxbury, against Slavery 22 names.

By P. T. Kenny, do. Marshfield, 39.

By S. W. Coggeshall, Conference action against Slavery—and on the Tract Society.

By G. M. Carpenter, against slavery from three places with signatures of 16, 40, and 42 names.

NEW JERSEY.—By J. McClintock, Conf. action on Division of Conference—on certain irregularities at Hoboken—Appeal of Topely. (This was fixed for Friday, May 8,)—Mem. from trustees of Metropolitan Church, which was referred to a special Com. of 5.

By S. Y. Munroe, a mem. on the P. E. question, signed by 9 persons.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.—By N. H. Culver, a petition to rid the

church of the evil of Slavery from the Claremont District Preachers Association—Also from Keeve, 44 names—N. Charlestown Station 29—Lebanon 24.

From the Same Association asking that each An. Conf. may be left to regulate the Presiding Elder question—And one of similar import from Winchester, 13 official members.

NEW YORK CONF.—By P. Rice, mem. relating to the Smith fund—asking the extension of time of preachers : also one from J. T. Hildreth, of Brooklyn, on the use and abuse of tobacco. I don't know why he sent it to me, unless it is because I use the pipe ! And I don't know exactly what to do with it. But as it is a slavish sort of habit, I suppose it might go to the Committee on Slavery ! (Great merriment.) The appeal of E. Dennison was made the order of the day for to-morrow.

TROY CONF.—By A. Witherspoon, Conf. action on Slavery, Revisals, and Boundaries.

By D. P. Hurlburt, against Slavery—36 names.

MICH. CONF.—By D. Burns, mem. from Parma, 64 names, and two others with 25 and 34 names, asking a change that will make all slaveholders hereafter ineligible to membership in the church.

#### BOOK AGENTS REPORT.

Of this the following facts are given, abridged.

*The California Advocate*.—In 1852 \$3000 was paid to its publishers from the missionary treasury on the draft of a bishop. In 1853 the Agents paid \$2005 more to them. In 1854 \$4,116 was paid out in the same direction by the New York Agents, making a total expense beyond all its revenue of \$9,121.

*New Machinery*.—Total for new machinery expended \$14,466 14.

*Periodical Department*.—Your Agents deeply regret that they are under the necessity of reporting a loss upon all the periodicals published by the Concern, except the *Christian Advocate and Journal*.

The following shows the cost and receipts of each for the last four years, together with the average number of subscribers :

#### CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE AND JOURNAL.

Average no. of subscribers	29,875	
Cost of publication	.	\$124,749 22
Receipts	.	141,731 67
Profits		\$16,982 45

## SUNDAY SCHOOL ADVOCATE.

Average circulation	83,500		
Expenses		\$95,831 85	
Receipts		81,497 27	
Loss			\$14,334 58

## NATIONAL MAGAZINE.

Average circulation	15,875		
Expenses		\$92,265 61	
Receipts		69,347 93	
Loss			\$22,917 68

## QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Average circulation	2,721		
Expenses		\$17,236 08	
Receipts		10,975 94	
Loss			\$6,260 14

Expenses over receipts on National Mag., Quarterly Review, and Sunday School Advocate	\$43,512 40
Deduct the profits on the Advocate and Journal	16,982 45

Bal. of expens. over rec'pts on all the periodicals \$26,529 95

*Book Department.*—The annual receipts were for 1852, \$182,757. 80; 1853, \$256,911. 78; 1854, \$300,655. 44; 1855, \$260,409. 16; Total \$1,000,734. 18.

*Capital and Revenue.*—On the first of January, 1852, the books of the Concern showed the Capital to be: Real Estate, \$130,568 63; Personal Property, \$511,978 37; total amount of Capital \$642,547.

From this sum deduct the following appropriations made by the General Conference of 1852; Expenses of said Conference, \$3,364 59; Pittsburgh Christian Advocate, \$3,598 31; and dividends for 1852, \$11,457 50; making the sum of \$18,420 40. This deducted, leaves \$624,126 60. Add to this the profits of the year 1852, \$49,383 30, and you have, at the close of the year 1852, \$673,509 90.

In the settlement with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1853, we agreed to pay the sum of \$191,000 in cash, and \$40,648 51 in notes and accounts, making \$231,648 51. Expenses in said suit, \$2,063. Total, \$233,711 51; leaving the nominal Capital, in 1853, \$439,798 39.

Profits for the last three years are as follows: 1853, \$54,354 83; 1854, \$54,844 75; 1855, \$32,679 89. Total, \$141,879 47. This shows a fraction less than 11 per cent. per annum on the whole capital, after the division of the property with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Your Agents feel impelled to say, that while the above shows the nominal Capital in 1852 and 1853, its real value was much less, there being, after the settlement with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, not less than \$50,000 of notes and book accounts against persons from whom the first dollar could not be collected; and, besides this, there was a large amount of old, soiled, and unsaleable books and sheet stock, which had been accumulating for many years. Of the sheet stock which was inventoried at cost, your Agents have sold over 47 tons, at an average price of 2-3-4 cents per pound, or \$55 per ton. Here is a deduction to be made of at least \$15,000. The bound stock has been sold at a loss of about \$500. After deducting from the notes and book accounts the amount which was transferred to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the settlement, and the \$50,000 of bad debts, there remained, in notes and accounts, \$101,928 87, upon which your Agents judge there should be a deduction of at least 15 per cent., making \$15,289 38. These several sums, taken from the nominal amount of Capital in 1852, left the real Capital, after the division of the property with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, \$359,009 01, allowing the real estate, presses, stereotype plates, &c., as then inventoried, which was evidently too high, and more than the property was worth. Instead, then, of reckoning the per centage as above, on the sum of \$439,798 39, it should be on \$359,009 01, which would show a profit on the Capital, for the last three years, of a fraction over 13 per cent. per annum.

### ASSETS.

REAL ESTATE.	CASH VAL. OF PROPERTY.
House and lot in Sixth-st.	\$9,000 00
Do. do. Seventh-st.	9,500 00
Buildings and lots in Mulberry-st.	100,000 00
CASH.	
Cash in Bank and in hand	23,851 10
New York and Erie Railroad Bonds	4,000 00
PERIODICALS.	
Amount due on Periodical Accounts	00,000, 00
MERCHANDISE.	
Sunday-school Books, Books of the General Catalogue, Sheet-stock, &c.	139,200 00
PRINTING-OFFICE.	
Presses, Type, Stereotype Plates, Wood Cuts, Furniture, White Paper, &c.	105,153 00
BINDERY.	
Presses, Tools, Sheet-stock, &c.	95,916 00

## NOTES AND BOOK ACCOUNTS.

Notes and Book Accounts	138,311 70
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Total	\$624,931 80
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## LIABILITIES.

Book Accounts and Notes, including Bonds due M. E. Church, South	170,704, 60
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Capital Stock	\$454,227 20
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## REMARKS.

The *comparative* exhibit is modified so as to present a cash valuation upon the property a valuation which could be realized in case of sale, and differs from the exhibit to the Annual Conferences in the following items: Real Estate, less, \$20,112 84; amount due on Periodical account is thrown out, because subscriptions received in advance would about off-set the same, \$10,000; Merchandise, 10 per cent. deducted, \$15,488 18; Printing-office stock, 10 per cent. deducted, \$11,683 08; Bindery stock, 10 per cent. deducted, \$10,657 56; Notes and Book Accounts, 25 per cent. additional deducted, \$46,103 90. Total, less than the showing made to the Annual Conferences, \$114,045 56.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

May 5.—Bishop Ames presided. The report of the Western Book Agents was the first thing attended to.

*Financial Exhibit.*—The exhibit now presented, being the commencement of a new series of Exhibits, growing out of the recent settlement with the Methodist Episcopal Church South, shows the condition of the Concern November 30, 1855—from which you will perceive that the capital stock of the Concern has been reduced from \$216,203.53 to \$150,405.74 by the deduction of the debt due the Church South, the expenses of the Church Suit, and the reduction in our inventory of the entire stock on hand to its cash value. But for these extraordinary reductions, the capital stock would have been, at the date of our Exhibit, \$250,816.62; which would show a profit in our business, from March 31, 1852, to November 30, 1855—a period of three and two-third years—of \$34,613.09.

Our sales of books, including those sold to the Chicago Depository, for the last four years, ending March 31st, amounted to	\$346,886 80
Being an increase over the previous four years of	\$86,057 27

Periodical sales for the same time, including those sold to the Depository, amount to	302,953 93
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Making the increase over the past four years of	90,804 63
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Total book and periodical sales	\$649,840 73
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Total increase,	\$176,861 90
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*Periodicals.*—Our periodicals are all in a most flourishing condition :

We are sending out now of the Western Christian Advocate,	28,718	
Giving us an increase in the past four years of		7,718
The Ladies' Repository has a subscription list of	29,580	
Which is an increase of		16,580
The Christian Apologist has a subscription list of	6,967	
Being an increase of		3,593

Our other periodicals have subscription lists as follows :

Sunday School Advocate,	31,192
Missionary Advocate,	5,055
National Magazine,	2,163
Quarterly Review,	442

All the periodicals published at the Western Book Concern are now yielding an annual profit.

We were instructed to establish a paper and Depository of books at Chicago ; the paper to be called the North-Western Christian Advocate. This we proceeded to do ; and although the rush of conferences came upon us immediately after the General Conference, and our Church Suit with the South was also pending, involving great care and anxiety, as may be seen by reference to the report of the Commissioners of the Church Suit for the Western Book Concern, yet we had our Depository established and stocked with books for the trade early in the fall of the same year ; and in carrying out the provisions for a weekly paper, we effected our arrangements so as to send out a specimen number in the fall of 1852 ; and the first number of the North-Western Christian Advocate was issued in the first week of January, 1853.

The Depository has exceeded our most sanguine expectations.

The sales of books at that place, since the establishment of the Depository, in October, 1852, up to March 31, 1856—a period of three years and five months—have been

\$142,209 67

Periodicals for the same time,

85,164 28

Total book and periodical sales,

\$227,373 95

The number of subscribers to the periodicals at the Chicago Depository is as follows :

North-Western Christian Advocate,	10,033
Ladies' Repository,	7,200
National Magazine,	2,400
Sunday School Advocate,	13,300

Missionary Advocate,  
Quarterly Review,

3,000  
218

The North-Western Christian Advocate has been published at a loss of \$4,653.30 ; but will, no doubt, soon pay for itself and yield a profit to the Concern.

J. H. Power presented a minority report, consisting of a series of resolutions pointing out the duties of the Book Committee. He would have them audit the Book Agents account. He thought that the committee should ascertain the aggregate of yearly receipts and expenses, and for what expended. Such was not the case however. Mr. Swormstedt had informed him, that the books were not so kept as to make such a statement or examination practical.

Dr. Clarke remarked, that the books were kept by a competent book keeper and open for inspection by the committee.

Mr. Walker, learned from the Agent, that it would require one or two additional clerks to keep the books so as to get the information that Brother Power's wished the committee to have.

P. Cartwright, told of their visit to and walks through all the rooms of the Concern, by which they learned of its condition and prosperity.

Power again explained. He thought the committee should know how much is paid for Agents and Clerks salaries—merchandise accounts—book expenses—general receipts. The report was referred.

Bishop Ames introduced Squire Grey-Eyes, a Wyandot Indian.

J. B. Finley, with a great deal of feeling referred to his own labors 25 years ago when he found Grey-Eyes, a wild man in the forests. Twenty years ago he had been ordained a Deacon. Since thence he has been laboring quietly, but very efficiently as a gospel minister, among his people.

A collection was taken up for Grey-Eyes, who is poor and traveling to see some old friends.

He was brought on to the stand for a speech. But not knowing a word of English, Finley interpreted. It was a singular, a touching scene, to look on that large body of men, intently gazing on this copper skinned man, who was murmuring in a low and almost indistinct manner, his talk.

He said, he was too little a man, to speak to so many large men. But if he was small he had the same love in his heart, that they had in their hearts, and hoped to see and live in the same heaven.

J. Wheeler, added, that he also said if he was small, God was great, and he was his servant.

Bro. Wheeler, gave a specimen of Grey-Eyes speech when the Sandusky mission was removed, and the Indians started for Kansas. It was very touching.

The New York Book Committee presented a report, generally complimentary, but indulging in some strictures about editors, going to Europe on their own motion, and putting other persons in their place, and the necessity of their living in or near New York city.

The Conferences were called over, and petitions and memorials presented.

#### PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS:

*New York East.*—By J. Kennedy, from New Haven 1st Church, favoring extension of time of preachers.

*Maine Conf.*—By S. Allen from Augusta and from Buxton, on Presiding Eldership. Also one on Slavery.

*Vermont Conf.*—By W. J. Kidder, from Middlesex, on Slavery.

*Black River.*—By A. J. Phelps, from Weedsport, on Presiding Eldership, and conference action on Slavery.

By F. H. Stanton, from the Q. Conf. of Watertown Church, and from the membership of said church against Slavery—100 names.

*East Maine.*—By L. L. Knox, conference action on Slavery.

*Pittsburg Conf.*—J. N. Baird, conference action on boundaries, German missions, and on Slavery.

*Wyoming.*—By W. H. Pearne, conference action on Slavery.

*Erie Conf.*—By W. Kinsly, conference action on boundaries, and the Q. Conf. action at Urbana, on division of conference. (Said a member near by in an under-tone: That man always looks pleased and feels very good over what he says.)

*Oneida Conf.*—By S. Park, conference action on Slavery.

By C. Starr, from Columbus, against Slavery—30 names.

*East Genessee.*—By J. Dodge, conference action on Slavery, and a memorial on boundaries from the Troy district.

By F. G. Hibbard from Ovid and Sheldrake, in favor of lay delegation in Annual and General Conference.

*Oregon Conf.*—By Wm. Roberts, conference action on a newspaper and Slavery.

*Ohio Conf.*—By J. M. Trimble, conference action on Slavery and boundaries.

*Indiana.*—By H. S. Talbot, conference action on Presiding Eldership, and on "extension of time."

*North Indiana.*—By C. N. Smith, conference action on "extension of time."

*South Indiana.*—C. W. Ruter, announced that they had no petitions, but might have had 10,000 names in favor of the institutions of the church as they are.

*Wisconsin.*—By J M Leihy, Conference action on slavery. (Slavery ! slavery ! said one quietly, "I'm sick of it.")

The appeal of Jonathan Snow was fixed on for Wednesday, May 14th.

*Rock River.*—By L. Hitchcock, Conference action on slavery.

*North Ohio.*—By W. B. Disbrow, Conference action on revisions.

By J. Wheeler, a memorial on baptism signed 50 persons—the character I failed to discover.

*Cincinnati Conference*—By G W Walker, from West Liberty, a memorial of one hundred persons, asking the transfer of that station to the Cincinnati Conference.

I N Macabee's appeal was fixed for May 13th

W Young presented the Cincinnati Conference action on finance.

*Baltimore Conf.*—By John A. Collins, a petition from the colored Local Preachers. He claimed for these brethren as much respect, as was due to any other portion of the Church in the United States of America. It was read. It was addressed to the "Rev. and Honorable gentleman"—and commenced "Your Honors," &c. They asked for an arrangement by which they might have the service of preachers of their own class, so arranged as to supply many destitute places in Maryland.

This occasioned some merriment, in view of the style—and a serio-comic gravity of rebuke by Mr. Collins, who also occupied the Conference with assurances of personal interest in

the colored people, and his own high position in the esteem of these people. Referred.

It was voted that the mover of reformers of Conference journals, be instructed to copy the same for the respective committees.

H. Slicer, deemed it his duty to declare that the memorial presented by J. A. Collins, was from a questionable source, and in his opinion, was a radical and revolutionary movement.

J. A. Collins, dissented with firmness from this view.

*New England Conf.*—By T. Marcy, six different memorials from appointments on the Springfield District.

Rev. H. Bangs, moved the reference of a resolution instructing the committee on Temporal Economy, to enquire into the propriety of having the widows of bishops paid their allowance in the same manner the bishops are paid, instead of by the Annual Conferences. Referred.

The President, Bishop Baker, announced the special committees as follows :

*Committee to Respond to the Address of the British Conference*—J. P. Durbin, J. M. Trimble, F. G. Hibbard, S. Allen, T. B. Sargent.

*Committee on Trials and Appeals*—James Porter, T. J. Thompson, William Reddy, Hiram Kinsley, J. M. Jamieson, H. W. Reed, S. D. Brown.

*Committee on Pastoral Address*—A. Griffith, E. G. Wood, L. W. Berry, R. S. Rust, J. N. Baird.

*Committee on Expenses of the Delegates*—John S. Porter, Wm. Cox, I. M. Leiby.

*Committee on Temperance*—Henry Slicer, A. A. Reece, L. Hitchcock, J. B. Merwin, Wm. Rice, Wm. Young, Thos. H. Pearne.

*Committee on Temporal Economy*—Heman Bangs, Elmore Yocum, T. Carlton, A. Poe, J. Vancleve, P. T. Kenney, C. D. Pillsbury.

*Committee on the Bible Cause*—Elias Bowen, William H. Collins, Alonzo Webster, Lorenzo R. Thayer, George R. Crooks, Hooper Crews, John M. Ried.

*Committee on the Smith Arnold Fund*—L. Phillips, A. M. Osbon, J. Floy, W. A. Wilmer, J. Cunningham, I. N. Felch, J. Dennis.

*Committee on the Education of Colored Youth*—Cyrus

Brooks, Z. Connell, Moses Hill, H. E. Pilcher, M. Dustin, F. C. Holliday R. Boyd

*Committee on Colored Membership*—G. F. Brown, L. B. Gurley, T. J. Quigley, S. A. Blake, J. Drummond, E. E. Griswold, George M. Carpenter.

*Committee on the Metropolitan Church*—J. McClintock, M. Raymond, J. P. Darbin, J. V. Watson, E. Thomson.

After giving out notices, the Conference adjourned.

#### FIFTH DAY.

*May 6, Morning Session.*—Bishop Simpson presided.—

On reading the minutes, the reference of the Tobacco memorial was talked of.

J. Kennedy, wished the name of Mr. Hildreth, inserted in the minutes. The Secretary, Mr. Harris, was willing to stand up by the side of Bro. Hildreth on that question. N. Wilson wanted it recorded on the Journal, that this memorial was referred at the instance of P. Rice. To this, Rice was agreed. N. Wilson did not wish the general General Conference to be responsible for such a reference.

L. Hitchcock, as one of the committee, asked if that reference was serious, or a joke. Some one declared that it was serious. Exactly so, said P. Rice. There ought to be no objection to that reference. Tobacco is raised by slaves, sir. It is used only by slaves, sir, and is altogether a slavish concern. I insist upon it, that it belongs to that committee ! (Laughter.)

The appeal of E. Dennison was taken up and occupied the morning session. He appeals from the New York Conference, which had expelled him for certain alleged frauds. J. H. Perry, appeared for the appellant, and J. M. Osbon, for the Conference. Adjourned.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference met, pursuant to adjournment, Bishop Simpson in the chair.

Dr. Peck opened the religious exercises by reading the Scriptures, singing, and prayer.

The journals of the morning session were read and approved.

Dr. Perry resumed the defense of the appellant, whose case was under consideration at the hour of adjournment.

After Dr. Perry had finished his argument as counsel in behalf of the appellant,

Dr. Osbon appeared as the representative of the New York Conference in the prosecution.

Dr. Perry followed in a closing address ; after which,

Mr. H. Bangs offered the following :

*Resolved*, by the Delegates of the Conference in General Conference assembled, That the decision of the New York Conference in the case of Eli Dennison, be and is hereby reversed. Carried.

After the giving out of notices, the Conference adjourned.

#### SIXTH DAY.

*May 7, Morning Session.*—Bisop Waugh Presided. The appeal case of Mr. Snow from the decision of the Illinois Conference, by which he was expelled was taken up After hearing the appellant it was referred back to the Illinois Conference for a new trial.

Rev. Messrs. Ryerson and Jones, from the Canada Wesleyan Conference, were introduced and delivered brief addresses. Their letter testimonials was read and referred, and complimentary resolutions adopted

G. Baker of Black River Conference, communicated expressions of regret from Bro. Grey, (deceased,) explanatory of his failure to attend the Canada Conference as he was directed.

Rev's. R. Scott and McCathers, delegates from the Irish Conference were introduced. The address of that body was read.

Mr. Scott, expressed his profound respect for the body before whom he appeared, and at once adverted to the character of his mission. It was not one of mere courtesy, nor to give expression to fraternal feeling, but one whose chief design was to seek for their sympathy and aid in carrying forward the work, in which they were engaged as a conference. It is true that all appropriate occasions are to be employed for conveying an expression of our brotherly feelings, yet we shall not often at very great length occupy your attention so much on this matter, as on the specific object he had already named.

The flattering reception already tendered to him by the bishops, and the Annual Conferences he had visited in the

East and West, had made an agreeable and ineffaceable impression on his heart. He would not now put the case fully before them. That he would do hereafter. He deemed it a remarkable providence that without designing it, the Irish Conference had entered upon the arrangements for prosecuting this measure of seeking for aid so as to enable to be present at this General Conference with their way opened up by the action of five conferences in the East and six in the West, and the noble contributions already made by the people. With other remarks, the revered gentleman concluded.

Mr. McCathers, spoke of himself as one unmentioned and unalluded to, and therefore more indebted to them for the distinguished honor of an introduction and a place among them. In the absence of others, he was a volunteer associate and companion of Mr. Scott. The assembly before him—the venerable bishops on the platform—the presence of his old and highly esteemed tutor, Dr. Hannah, (whom he hoped would not disown him,) and his friend Mr. Jobson, with the attendance of his Canada brethren, all combined to press from him two thoughts that had occupied his mind on his way.

First—Wesleyan Methodism in Ireland is a worthy fact, a fact worthy of the attention of this General Conference. It is a good fact for Ireland.

Second—It would be better for Ireland, if there were no Papists there, and if the whole land was filled with Methodists only.

He then talked on pleasantly and in a winning way, about the wants of Ireland, and the plans he hoped would be successful in this country. They aimed to raise \$100,000 here. And as the American brothers even had most generously given them, already half that sum, he hoped it was only coveting the best gifts, to hope, that they would be able to obtain the balance. This was urged in a good humored speech that left a broad smile of satisfaction beaming over the body.

J. H. Collins introduced three resolutions. The first instructed the Committee on Slavery, and that on Itinerancy, to mature their action on Slavery; and the Presiding Elder question, and the "extension of time" to three years, and report at as early period as practicable.

The second provides that when the report on either of the subjects named comes in, it shall become the standing order of the day, after the call for Petitions, Memorials and Appeals, until it shall have been disposed of.

The third required that the number and sex of the signers, to the various petitions and memorials should be reported to the General Conference.

The first was adopted without opposition.

The second met with decided opposition.

J. A. Collins, thought that the reason for such a resolution was "very plain." But James Porter could not see it. He had voted for the first, for he was anxious to have these question reported on promptly, and settled, yes, settled carefully and wisely. But this second resolution would trammel the Conference. Whichever of these committees by dexterity or diligence, put in a first report, monopolized an indefinite amount of time, to the exclusion of every thing else. He protested against having the hands of the Conference tied up in this way.

J. A. Collins, explained that the second followed the first.

J. Porter replied : "Not at all sir. It does not in my apprehension follow the first." Hereafter we can if we judge it necessary fix on any one or all of these questions as the special standing order. But I will not now thus tie my hands." ("Amen" shouted several.)

H. Slicer, favored the motion. So did Mr. Drummond of Virginia.

H. Watson and Elias Bowen, opposed it. But it prevailed by a vote of 102 to 97.

The hour of adjournment arrived.

#### SEVENTH DAY.

*May 8, Morning Session.*—Bishop Morris presided. I omitted to mention the appointment of a committee of five yesterday to nominate nine from whom the Conference should elect three delegates to attend the Canada Wesleyan Conference.

After reading the minutes, the special order of the day was suspended. J. H. Porter, was changed from the Committee on the Episcopacy to that on the Book Concern. That

he might represent the minority report he had made on the Western Concern.

Dr. Thompson presented the report of the Commissioners on the Church Suit, in reference to their settlement with the Church South.

Dr. Hannah, requested, on behalf of the English Wesleyans, that a delegation should be appointed from the General Conference to that body.

J. A. Collins, wished "the paper" he presented yesterday to be taken up and the last resolution adopted. But the motion to take up, was lost, 104 to 66.

Bishop Waugh, presented the memorial of the Liberia Mission Conference. Referred.

A general struggle was made to get the floor. "Mr. President"—"Mr. President"—shouted several as they stood waiting to be recognized. "Have I got the floor" was the enquiry. Bishop Morris, whom no one would suspect of being humorous, put a broad smile upon the face of the Conference by remarking, "Well I cannot decide. There is only one "Mr. President" and so many speakers, that I am at a loss to know who is entitled to the floor."

Griswold of New York, presented the conference action in favor of having those preachers who are now out in the service supported by that portion of the church where their labors have been devoted.

The report of the special committee on a communication from California, respecting S. D. Simonds, represented, that the course he pursued was in accordance with the advice of his presiding elder—and moreover, the matter was not within the jurisdiction of the General Conference.

The appeal of S. D. Harlan, from the decision by which the Cincinnati Conference expelled him from the ministry, was taken up. The Conference sat with closed doors. The case involves charges of seduction made against ex-bishop Hamlin. The complaint against Mr. Harlan, is for slandering the Bishop. This matter has been before the public already.

The same trial occupied the entire afternoon session without being completed.

## EIGHTH DAY.

*May 9—Morning Session.*—Conference assembled at the appointed hour. Bishop Scott in the chair.

Mr. Porter of New Jersey, conducted the religious exercises.

The journals of yesterday were read and approved.

On motion, the order of the day was resumed.

The Secretary then proceeded to read the unfinished testimony.

After the testimony was finished,

Mr. Walker, the representative of the Cincinnati Conference, remarked that he was prepared, with the consent of the appellant, to submit the case without argument.

Mr. Harlan declined to accede to the proposition, and proceeded to the argument in support of his appeal.

Mr. Kinsley moved that when the Conference adjourns, it adjourn to meet at half-past two o'clock, P. M.

Mr. Collins moved that the order of the day be suspended for the reception of petitions and memorials.

Mr. Triplett, of Kentucky, presented a memorial on Boundaries. Mr. Hopkins on the subject of the Book Depository at St. Louis. Mr. Robertson, the journals of the Arkansas Conference as relates to slavery. Mr. Hamilton, of Baltimore Conference, on the subject of division of said Conference. Mr. Collins, of same Conference, a remonstrance against the division of the Conference. Also, so much of the journals as relates to the action of the Wisconsin and North Ohio Conference on the subject of slavery.

Mr. Rice, of New-England, on the subject of slavery. Mr. Coggeshall, of Providence, the journals of said conference on the subject of the suppression of anti-slavery tracts by the Tract Society. Mr. Kinney, of Providence, on the subject of slavery. Mr. Brown, so much of the journals of the New Jersey conference as relates to the subject of slavery.

Dr. McClintock moved that the Committee on Revisals have access to the journals of the General Conference of 1852. Carried.

Mr. Randall, of Maine conference; Mr. Thurston, of New Hampshire; Mr. Culver, of New Hampshire; and Mr. Witherspoon, of the Troy conference, on slavery.

Mr. Brown, presented a memorial on law questions, which

was referred to the committee on Itinerancy. Mr. Merwin, of the New York East conference, on the subject of a court

Dr. Drummond, of Western Virginia conference, presented a letter addressed to Bishop Janes on the subject of insuring churches; referred to committee on Temporal Economy.

Mr. Pratt, of East Maine, presented a memorial on the extension of ministerial time, and also memorials on slavery.

Mr. Hawkins, of Erie conference, on the extension of time.

Dr. Bowen, of Oneida conference, a petition on slavery. Mr. Bristol, of same conference, on the subject of slavery. Mr. Dennis, of East Genesee, presented memorials on boundary, extension of time, and slavery.

Mr. Gillett, of Michigan conference, on slavery. Mr. Collins, on slavery. Mr. Burns on slavery. Mr. Cooper, of North Indiana conference, on the subject of slavery. Mr. Bennett, of Wisconsin conference, on subject of slavery.

Mr. H. Regua moved that so much of the journal of the Wisconsin conference as asks for an *elective* presiding eldership, be referred to the committee on Itinerancy.

And so much of the journal as relates to a more efficient support of the ministry, be referred to the committee on Temporal Economy.

Mr. Harris, of the North Ohio conference, on boundaries from South Delaware. Referred.

Mr. Poe, so much of the journals of the North Ohio conference as relates to the free people of color, be referred to said committee; also, a memorial on the revision of the ritual on Baptism; also, on the subject of boundaries.

Mr. Walker, of Cincinnati conference, presented a memorial on the subject of Sabbath schools; also, one on Finance; also on superintendents of Sunday schools and table expenses. Referred.

Mr. Young presented a memorial from Union Chapel, Cincinnati, in relation to the insertion of a note in the Cincinnati edition of the Discipline on the subject of pews.—Referred.

Mr. Wood, of S. E. Indiana conference, presented a letter in relation to the case of Brother Moot; also a memorial from the Sunday School Association of Indiana. Referred.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference assembled at the appointed hour. Bishop Simpson in the chair.

Mr. Reddy conducted the religious exercises.

The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Crews presented a memorial from a member of the Rock River conference on the subject of books. Referred to committee on Book Concern.

Mr. Kingsley, of Genesee conference, presented a memorial on slavery, and one on church insurance. Referred.

On motion, the unfinished business was taken up, and L. D. Harlan resumed his argument.

Mr. Walker rose, after the argument of the appellant had been finished, and submitted the case to the decision of the conference.

Mr. Dustin moved that the Delegates of the Cincinnati conference be excused from voting. Carried.

Mr. Jamison, of the Ohio conference, was also excused, not having been present during the whole trial.

The appellant having retired, the journals of the Cincinnati conference in relation to the charges, specifications and findings were then read.

Dr. Young offered the following :

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal church in General Conference assembled, that the decision of the Cincinnati Conference of said church, in the case of L. D. Harlan, be and the same is hereby affirmed.

139 voted in the affirmative.

Mr. Porter moved that the appeal case of N. Stokely, who had been expelled from the New Jersey conference, be now taken up. Carried.

Mr. Coombe moved that the appeal be admitted. Carried.

Mr. Coombe stated the grounds of appeal.

The charges, specifications, and findings were then read.

The testimony was then called for and read.

A motion to adjourn was lost.

Mr. Lowrey moved that the rule be suspended for the purpose of having the journals read in regard to the finding, in the case of L. D. Harlan. Carried.

Mr. Collins moved that Conference adjourn. Carried.

## NINTH DAY.

*May 10,—Morning Session.*—Bishop Baker presided. The case of N. Stokely was taken up. After examination by arguments pro and con., the decision of the New Jersey Conference was reversed.

Several reports were presented and referred. The report from the Missionary Committee caused quite a lively discussion. It had been amended so as to do away with membership by yearly contribution; leaving the membership to consist of life members only—those who paid \$20 or more at one time to the treasury. It was finally moved to lay on the table so as to print. Those in the vicinity of New York opposed. While Baltimore never favored such a disposition of it.

Mr. Slicer was very determined, and indulged in some irony at the expense of New York. The proposed arrangement was too much of a government by the nobles, he said. He deemed the poor man who paid \$2 a year of his own money to the Missionary Society, was as proper a person to choose the managers of that society as the man whose friends had paid for him \$20 at one time. He thought that there was danger that New York would come to be regarded as having the right to govern the financial affairs of the empire of Methodism. This he would prevent.

The motion to print prevailed.

**REVISALS.**—J. McClintock presented Report No. 1, from the Committee on Revisals. It favored the following changes. Lessening the number of delegates, by making 27 instead of 21 the basis—fixing 45 instead of 30 as the limit of future change—striking all that relates to Band societies—making the call of an extra session of Conference to depend upon two-thirds of all the Annual Conferences.

The report lies on the table one day by rule.

**METROPOLITAN CHURCH.**—J. McClintock from a special committee reported, that, since 1852 H. Slicer as agent for two years—and Mr. Ryan for more than one year agent, had obtained in, cash \$13,600. There was now due on subscriptions \$23,400. Of the money paid in \$8,000 had been paid for a lot, and \$5,600 expended for the foundation.—There was needed yet, \$40,000 more in order to have an edifice of style, dimensions, and material adapted to the de-

sign of this enterprise, as a memorial of gratitude to God for his blessing in making the Methodist E. Church instrumental in so large a degree of spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands.

The report proposed to authorize a collection in every congregation before the 1st of July, 1857,—it requested the special co-operation of the bishops—advised that the appointments to be made of pastor, should by transfer secure the services of men from all parts of the work.

Laid on the table—to be printed.

LEGACY OF \$750.—L. Swormstedt presented a communication informing the Conference of a legacy of \$750, by Noble Melvin deceased, to be appropriated by the General Conference in distributing the Holy Scriptures.

A variety of suggestions were made for disposing of the money. It was finally referred to a special committee of 5 to consider.

#### PETITIONS, MEMORIALS, &C.

N. Y. CONF.—Lucius H. King—a remonstrance against any change of the P. Eldership, signed by a majority of the official members of the Duane st. Church. Also a letter from one Oakly, who had by importunity been persuaded to sign a petition for change, from which he now asked to withdraw his name. Sundry statements were made by Mr. Smith, calculated to damage the memorials presented yesterday by Mr. Mattison, to whom he referred by name.

This called up Mattison, who was not allowed to explain as he desired, but whose letter of explanation was referred to the committee.

By J. M. Ried—from 17 official members of Eighteenth st. Church, in favor of change in the P. Eldership.

TROY CONF.—By S. D. Brown, from the Albany city preacher's meeting—ditto.

N. Y. EAST.—By Heman Bangs, from the Q. Conf., of John st. Church, on the removal of that Church.

CALIFORNIA CONF.—By J. Blem, asking reference of memorials of 1852, in relation to the California Advocate, to the special committee.

MAINE CONF.—By D. B. Randall, Conference action on Slavery.

BLACK RIVER.—By A. J. Phelps, from the Syracuse District, signed by H. Shepherd and 100 others.

WEST VIRGINIA.—By J. Drummond, Conf. action on the Troy, N. Ohio, Erie and Wisconsin Conference resolutions on Slavery.

ERIE CONF.—By Moses Hill, from J. Howe, in relation to lost money.

GENESSEE CONF.—By I. Chamberlain, Conf. action on Slavery.

MICHIGAN CONF.—By J. K. Gillet, from Jonesville circuit, on Slavery.

ROCK RIVER CONF.—By Bishop Morris, from J. Chandler and nine others, traveling and local preachers, praying for a more careful enquiry into the management of the Book Concern—and also respecting the safe-guards of the Church Literature—and whether it be proper to allow of church editors traveling through or residing in Europe, while bearing the responsibilities of the editorship and receiving salary of the church funds.

IOWA CONF.—By——, from North Pleasant circuit, in favor of returning J. V. Watson as editor of the N. W. C. Advocate.

“Refer to committee on nominations,” said one.

“No, the committee on elections,” said another.

But it went to the Com. on Book Concern.

ILL. CONF.—By Geo. Rutledge, from M. Snow, on certain questions of law.

BALT. CONF.—By sundries, sundry petitions for and against the proposed line of division adopted by the late Conference.

PHILADELPHIA.—By J. P. Durbin, from the French Methodist Conference to the General Conference. Wishing to read it, the presentation was withheld.

EAST GENESSEE.—By——, a memorial on slavery from Wayne Co., N. Y., signed by Rev. W. Bradley and 166 others.

The Conference now adjourned.

#### TENTH DAY.

*May 12, Morning Session.*—Bishop Ames presided.

(Corrections—The memorial presented by Brown, from preachers of the Troy Conference, was on the Salary of preachers, and not on Slavery. The law questions submitted

by Snow, had reference to his claim on the Conference funds during the period of his illegal suspension.)

REPORTS.—George Peck presented a report on some unimportant matter—laid on the table under the rule.

PETITIONS, MEMORIALS, &c.—L. H. King, from the New York Conference, presented a memorial against leaving appointments to be supplied by the Presiding Elders with supernumerary preachers from other conferences.

B. F. Crary, presented a memorial for a change in the Discipline, by which superannuated preachers should become members of the Q. Conf. where they reside ; and that their certificates should be from the Q. Conf. and not from the Presiding Elder.

J. P. Durbin, presented the letter from the French Methodists which he referred to on Saturday, and withdrew. It gave a history of the cause in that country.

H. E. Pilcher, presented a resolution to appoint two delegates to the English Wesleyan Conference. Adopted.

A resolution was adopted, signed by S. Allen and G. Pratt, directing enquiry into the expediency of disconnecting the weekly periodicals from the Book Concern, so that their management and support be devolved upon the Conferences patronizing the same.

This resolution was opposed by Mr. Holliday, because that plan would give a controlling influence to local views and feelings. Each editor would become the representative of a distinct community ; his correspondence, and the paper, would have the specific character of the locality supporting it. This would prevent harmony in the connection, and give to each local editor a power for promoting discord that no other in the church possessed. And it was thought that there should be uniformity of sentiment and action among the official organs of the church.

H. Mattison, proposed a resolution of instruction to the revisal committee, in favor of striking out the exception in respect to the preacher or preachers in New Orleans. Referred.

Other items of minor importance were presented and referred to the committee on revisals.

H. Hodgson, proposed a change, by which, taking civil office should be a disqualification for election to the General

Conference—said disqualification to continue until removed by the Annual Conference. Referred.

Dr. E. Thomson, offered a resolution enquiring into the expediency of districting the superintendents every four years, yet so as not to interfere with the itinerant general superintendency.

Dr. Durbin, had listened with both his ears, but could not understand what was meant by it. He was not opposed to its going to the committee, but he doubted if the meaning of it could be understood. It was referred, after being objected to by a vote of 68 to 32, to the Committee on Itinerancy.

H. Bangs and J. M. Ried, offered a resolution of enquiry on the expediency of having the Presiding Elders elected by the Annual Conferences, and constituted the legal council of the Bishop in making the appointments.

The report of the General Committee on Missions was presented and read.

In reference to one item, Dr. Durbin remarked that the sum of \$6,000, and more for "administration" was a nominal sum to make up an even balance. The actual cost of administering the affairs of the Society was not more than \$4,000, leaving out stationary.

B. M. Hall, offered a resolution favoring striking out the direction to meet the men and women apart.

H. Bangs, called up the resolution reported from the committee on Temporal Economy, which proposes to strike out all that relates to estimating the amount for preachers salary, leaving it to the people to fix the salary.

He thought it would be as well for the preachers—it would satisfy the people—and perhaps put a quietus on the agitation in favor of lay delegation.

The change was opposed by Mr. Heath, who deemed it a gift of power to the people, not proper. There was an increasing disposition among the people to exercise power in this direction, and he would not increase power in their hands. The demand for given preachers is now very common. Put this money matter in their hands wholly, and they will compel attention to their demands by refusing an adequate support to those they do not ask for.

D. B. Randall, favored striking out. "If we had a large fund to draw on, we might fix on salary" said he. But as

the people pay, they should have the say. He was willing to trust them. It would moreover correspond with the practise of the church. "For we, in New England, know nothing about "quarterage." We deem it a bottomless bag, we are unable to find the bottom of it. You in the West may have found it. He concluded with the declaration of a willingness to trust the people. He was not afraid of their starving him.

A. Griffith opposed it, as interfering with the principles of estimate for the claim of the superannuated, the widows and orphans.

H. Bangs, explained that it did not interfere. A separate chapter would contrall them.

H. Slicer, declared that it was a singular doctrine advanced by Brother Randall. Because the practise of some violated the provisions of the book, therefore the book must be changed. A good law is broken, therefore conform the law to the bad practise.

Much is said of progress, but this is progressing backward. He deemed it an unfortunate period for the consideration of so radical a measure. Many of the members of the Conference were away. Of 15 in their delegation, but 5 were present. They had been sent away at a distance to preach. He was opposed to action now.

He was opposed to action in that direction wholly. There was too much disposition to overslaugh the old land-marks of Methodism. He did not like the tendency to innovation indicated in New England.

The Baltimore Conference had done some thing to promote the Methodist Evangelization of New England. When such men as Joshua Wells, Thomas Birch, Brother Filmore, W. Lee and Jesse Lee, labored then, you heard of no such notions. He insisted on their abiding by the book, by the book, to the letter.

He deemed it a great misfortune that there was such a kind of restless anxiety to tinker with constitutions and patch up the laws. The language of a great man, whose words should be settled as a proverb, was this : It should be remembered that to innovate is not to reform. In view of the empty seats, he moved to lay it on the table.

Wm. Cooper exclaimed, "I hope it will not prevail."

W. L. Harris, thought it a strange motion for a man to make at the end of his speech.

It failed, 59 to 64.

H. Slicer objected that no quorum was present.

Mr. Cooper followed. "I am in favor of the report, sir. I do not believe the doctrine, sir, that because our fathers wore short jackets, that we should do so too. Nor because Lee and Wells, wore shad bellied coats, that we should wear them. This sir, is an age of progress. And progress in a right direction will do good. My worthy Brother—— (what's his name ?)

"Heath, Heath"—Uriah the Hittite, said a voice) My brother Heath deprecated the idea that a man should be paid according to his work. Now I go in for that thing, sir. If a preacher runs away from his work and spends weeks together—or goes off to Europe and stays for months, I go for docking him sir. Indeed this plan will remedy some serious difficulties we now have. The term quarterage ought to be stricken from the Discipline and from Methodism. We need our pay earlier than quarterly—we want it monthly, who live from hand to mouth, or oftener sir. And beside our people who go in for wearing short jackets because our fathers wore them, take quarterage to mean a quarter of a dollar, sir. It must be done away.

Let the pay be according to the work done and we shall get rid of many hangers-on that now trouble us. Men who cannot acquit themselves with credit in any place, and whom our Bishops and Presiding Elders are some times three days in trying to dispose of. If they are sent where their work is not worthy of the hire of the people, let such go at some other business.

Dr. Thompson requested a call of the house. It was ascertained that 138 only were present. This was 8 less than a quorum. After delaying some moments, only two were found, and the Conference adjourned.

#### ELEVENTH DAY.

*May 13—Morning Session*—Conference assembled at the appointed hour. Bishop Waugh in the chair. The religious services were conducted by Dr. Chamberlayne.

The journals were read.

Mr. Collins offered the following :

Whereas, The Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal church provides that at all times when the General Confer-

ence is met, it shall take two-thirds of the representatives of all the Annual Conferences to make a quorum for transacting business, and whereas, no quorum was present during the session of yesterday. Therefore,

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, that the proceedings of the members of the General Conference on yesterday morning be, and the same are hereby declared to be null and void, and that they be entered on the journal.

The preamble and resolution elicited discussion, in which Messrs. Collins, Durbin, Slicer, Hibbard, Perry, and Wilson participated.

Mr. Baird moved that the resolution be laid on the table. Carried.

Mr. Phillips moved that the journals be approved.—Carried

Mr. Porter, of N. J., moved that the special order of the day be postponed. Carried.

Mr. Phillips presented a joint communication from the Agents of the Book Concern at New York and Cincinnati. Referred.

Bishop Waugh presented a communication from the Committee of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and addressed to the General Conference. The document was fraternal and urged the importance of a cultivation of the most amicable relations between the United States and Great Britain, deprecating any alienation between these countries, and praying that peace and prosperity may forever exist. Dr. Kenneday offered the following :

*Resolved*, That most fraternally reciprocating the Christian sentiments expressed in the communication from the Congregational Union of England and Wales, a committee of five be appointed to prepare a suitable reply thereto.

*Resolved*, That the communication be published in all our church papers.

Mr. Wilson offered the following as a substitute :

That the document be referred to the Bishops with a request that they make a reply and append their names thereto. Lost.

Mr. Mattison offered the following as a substitute :

*Resolved*, That we most cordially reciprocate the fraternal and Christian sentiments of the Congregational Union

of England and Wales, as expressed in the communication to this body, and that a committee of ——— be appointed to prepare and report a suitable response to the same.  
Lost.

Dr. Hannah having been called upon to make some remarks on the communication, stated that he was personally acquainted with Dr. Halley, and he cordially concurred in the Christian and fraternal sentiments expressed in the communication.

The resolution of Dr. Kenneday prevailed.

Bishop Waugh presented a memorial of the Sunday School Union of the M. E. Church. Referred and ordered to be printed.

Our aggregate of Sunday school statistics at the close of 1855 was

Schools,	.	.	.	.	10,469
Officers and Teachers,	.	.	.	.	113,159
Scholars,	.	.	.	.	579,126
* Volumes in Libraries,	.	.	.	.	1,836,562
Bible Classes	.	.	.	.	11,634
Scholars in Infant Classes	.	.	.	.	60,325
Expenses of Schools,	.	.	.	.	\$102,485
Raised for the Sunday School Union,	.	.	.	.	11,381
Sunday School Advocates taken,	.	.	.	.	104,347
Conversions,	.	.	.	.	17,443

Dr. Kenneday moved that the ministers of the different denominations of this city be invited to take seats within the bar of the Conference. Carried.

Mr. Bristol presented a memorial on Boundaries Referred.

The Chair introduced Mr. Jacoby, the Superintendent of missions in Germany.

Dr. Floy moved that that part of the address of Mr. Jacoby which relates to the subject of a Book Concern in Germany, be referred to committee on the Book Concern. Laid over.

On motion, the order of the day, which was to take up the appeal case of I. N. McAbee, was taken up. Daniel Demott and Levi Johnson were appointed door-keepers.

On motion of Mr. Coombe, the appeal case of I. N. McAbee was admitted.

Mr. Walker, in behalf of the appellant, stated the grounds of the appeal to be, that the testimony of the case

was insufficient to sustain the charges and specifications, and that the decision of the Pittsburgh Conference did injustice to the appellant.

The charges and specifications were read, followed by reading of the testimony.

After the testimony was concluded, Mr. McAbee appeared in his own behalf.

Mr. Cox moved that when the Conference adjourns it adjourn until half past 2 o'clock. Carried.

The appellant resumed his argument.

Conference adjourned.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference met at the usual hour. Bishop Morris in the chair. The religious services were conducted by Mr. Pilcher, of Michigan.

On motion of Mr. Cooper, of Indiana, the roll was called, and a quorum being present, the journals were read and approved.

Dr. Osborn moved to suspend the order of the day, which being carried, he presented the report of the managers of the Tract Society, which was referred to the committee on that subject.

Dr. Parks moved that the Conference resume the case under consideration at the time of adjournment.

Mr. McAbee then resumed his argument, and after he had concluded,

Dr. Wakefield, as the prosecutor in behalf of the Pittsburgh conference, addressed the Conference

Mr. Baird, also a representative of the Pittsburgh conference, made a few remarks and submitted the case.

Mr. Walker then rose in behalf of the appellant, and addressed the Conference, after which,

On motion, the delegates from the Pittsburgh Conference were excused from voting.

Mr. Finley offered the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Sargent :

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That the decision of the Pittsburgh Conference in the case of I. N. McAbee be and the same is hereby reversed.

Affirmative 138, negative 16.

Mr. Slicer moved that the Committee on the Court of Trials and Appeals be requested to bring in their report by Thursday morning next. Carried.

Mr. Dana offered the following :

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That as the highest judicial authority of the Church, we do hereby declare that the true meaning of the item in the General Rules concerning the buying and selling of men, women, and children, is to prohibit not only the trade in slaves in numbers together, as some interpret it, but the buying or selling of any individual.

*Resolved*, That the following note be appended in the margin of the page to the said item in the General Rules, viz. :

The intent and purpose of this rule is fully to forbid the purchase or sale of any slave, or slaves, except it be for immediate liberation ; and whosoever buys or sells any slave except for this purpose, violates the rule.

Referred.

Mr. Crawford offered the following.

*Resolved*, That the election of General conference officers, viz. : Corresponding Secretaries, Editors, and Book Agents, be the order of the day for Thursday, 15th instant, immediately after the reading of the journals.

Mr. Collins, of Baltimore Conference, remarked that he was opposed to the resolution. He was not prepared to vote for any man until the great question of slavery was settled. He wanted to know exactly how every man stood on that subject. He wanted to see every one show his hand, and when the vote is taken, to walk up to the desk, and say yea or nay. There were doubtless many who were candidates for office who could not get the votes they expected if it was known where they stood on this question. Before the offices were filled, he wished to know what was to be the condition of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He hoped in the Providence of God we might remain one and harmonious. He did not wish to lose New England ; its education and religion and refinement were dear to him, and its early associations would ever be cherished by him. He loved also the west and north-west, and he hoped all would stand by the union of Methodism, and he would steadily and

heartily oppose whatever would threaten the peace and prosperity of the Church.

Mr. Cooper, of Philadelphia, remarked that Conference was not prepared to vote on the resolution at that time, and he closed by moving to lay it on the table. Motion prevailed.

Dr. Cartwright presented two petitions in relation to a paper and depository at St. Louis.

Mr. Van Deusen presented a report from the Committee on Sunday Schools, which was on motion referred and ordered to be printed.

On motion, Conference adjourned.

#### TWELFTH DAY.

*May 14, Morning Session.*—Bishop Janes presided. After the usual order of services, and the approval of the minutes, N. Wilson, called for the suspension of the order of the day, that reports from standing committees might be offered.

The Chair said until the order of the day is taken up by special vote the reports of committees were in order.

H. Bangs, from the Committee on Temperal Economy, reported adversely to various petitions on minor questions not necessary to detail.

N. Wilson, from the Committee on Itinerancy, reported on the subject of extending the time for stationing men in one place from two to three and five years. The report specified the petitions under their notice, as containing less than 100 names in favor of a change—while they had also, the action of the New York Conference, and a memorial from Duane St. Church against it. Their report declared that it was inexpedient to make any change.

J. Kennedy, moved to recommit the report. It was partial and without changing it as designed, it was unfair. "Why tell us of the number of the memorialists," said he, "when the signers were official members only, or the officers of the meeting they represented?" The New York Conference remonstrance is specially mentioned. Yet the memorial of the New York East Conference is not named at all nor the memorial from New Haven. He thought that the report was got up too hastily. He was opposed to disposing of this question in so summary a manner.

J. H. Perry, deemed it better to meet the question now,

on the report before them. If recommitted it would be returned.

N. Wilson, explained the process of the investigation. It was first referred to a committee of five. Four of these were adverse to the proposed extension of time. Yet, two of them united with the one, and brought into the committee an affirmative report. And on that report they had an able and thorough discussion. But their present report was the expressive minds of 19 to 6.

E. E. Griswold, submitted whether it was in order to discuss the merits of the question, to recommit. If it—

J. B. Finley, "Mr. President, I."

E. E. Griswold, I have the floor I believe. And it is so strange a thing for me to have it, that I want to keep it a little while. As the mover of the memorial of the New York East Conference, he deemed it proper to say a few things. He considered the number of petitioners a very uncertain test of the strength of feeling on any question. Petitions are few or many, as preachers encourage their circulation. Where he labored, it would have been easy to secure the signatures of every man, woman and child.

The necessity of the change he argued from the interests of the church in particular localities. Indeed, such was the urgency of the case, that they had to resort to a kind of almost duplicity and characterize a man "sick," in order to have him continued a third year.

Various churches were now looking anxiously to this Conference, he said, to know whether their hopes would be disappointed or realized, in reference to the continuance of their pastors a third year.

The benefit of the preacher was also urged. It would compel study and diligence, that would be to them personally, a great advantage. He wished that they might be driven every week to their books and their closet, to bring therefrom things new and old.

To the allusions made to old fashioned Methodism, he replied—that this did not consist in modes of operation as much as to the doctrine of salvation by faith and the witness of the spirit. Other things were merely incidental. Indeed, the old modes of action were to extend the time as it became desirable and necessary for the success of the work. Three months was extended to six, and then to one year, and now

to two. What is now desired is, a carrying forward of the same principle.

He disclaimed all design of disparaging the well deserved reputation of the Fathers ; and yet he was free to say that in his opinion, the preachers of the present age are better prepared to fill the same station two years together, than the fathers were to do the same work for six months in a place. With other remarks, he concluded by urging an extension of the time.

J. A. Collins made a rejoinder to the remark about the fathers. He eulogised them as men whose equals are yet to be found, in respect to theirunction, fervor, and power.

E. E. Griswold, explained that his remark related to their capacity for continued labor in one place.

J. A. Collins quickly retorted. I take it sir, that as the razor-strop man used to say, where I know of the ability to preach one or a few sermons of value, I assume that there are more of the same sort left. He deprecated the ascendancy of merely literary men, for he thought he saw a disposition in them to rule the roast. In a pleasant reference to Doctors of Divinity, Mr. Collins said in parenthesis, that he meant no reflection on them, and indeed, he should have no objection to that honorable title himself, if he could get it. But he concluded by declaring that as plain John Collins, he went for the system of itinerancy and for an itinerant ministry, heartily, fully and entirely.

Upon consultation, the motion to recommit was withdrawn.

Dr. Durbin, moved to recommit with instructions in favor of an extension of time with the consent of the Annual Conference by the request of the Bishop presiding.

He believed that much of the friction in the working of Methodism was occasioned by the fact that here in the General Conference we go too much into the minute detail of arrangements which are designed to extend over a range of country from Maine to the great North West. But the interests of the church are so large, so varied, that it is not possible for us to adjust the machinery fully and properly here. The first step in his judgment was to enlarge the discretionary power of the Annual Conferences in matters relating to themselves.

J. Dodge, favored the motion because he believed the

doctrine, and because two-thirds of his conference were in favor of it.

C. Kinsley, would have been in favor of the instruction, but for the appendage relative to Annual Conferences. That discretionary power he was opposed to. It would open the door to Congregationalism, that no man can shut, and which would separate the church into fragments. The itinerant system, in his judgment was the greatest system, the most glorious, most grand, below the sun, for pushing forward the triumphs of the Redeemer's kingdom.

S. W. Coggeshall rose, exclaiming, will you allow New England to be heard. I rise more particularly to correct a historic error which bears directly on an important question in this discussion. Much is said very properly about old fashioned Methodism. And a common repugnance is felt by us all to interfering with the old land marks. Now, said he, this change is not a disturbing of the old land marks—it is in fact a return to them.

Bishop Asbury had the constitutional right from the organization of the church to the General Conference of 1800, ("1804" said Dr. Kennedy)—thank you said he resuming. He had the right to change the appointments, or extend the time of the preachers as he judged best. He did extend the time of the Book Steward, who was also pastor of the St. George's charge, Philadelphia, from 1789, to 1793. Presiding Elders, also, were continued from 8 to 10 years on a district. He then argued that if it was deemed proper by a man possessing the transcendent abilities of Bishop Asbury, so to extend the time of service in special cases, it was certainly safe to adopt a parallel principle by restoring the old rule. This he deemed the almost unanimous voice of New England.

H. Slicer, proposed on rising, first to answer New England. It was at once declared by two or three that New England had not been represented by the remarks of Bro. Coggeshall. "Then" said Mr. S. "I give New England the benefit of the disclaimer." (D. B. Randall, at a subsequent period, emphatically denied that New England was agitated on this question. Not more than one memorial had come to this General Conference from within their limits. And upon this statement being made—again Mr. Slicer remarked, "All

honor to New England. I take back all insinuations respecting her people in this respect.")

"And what if Bishop Asbury, did in a particular case allow the Book Steward to remain four years in charge of St. George's Church? If in 1804, the General Conference took from the bishop the power to extend the time at his discretion, we have the embodied wisdom of the General Conference against the bishop in this matter.

Now sir, a word to New York. (New York East, said Osborn,) Bro. Griswold goes for the change because the preachers have bad memories. They can remember the contour of the face, but don't retain the names of their young people. Therefore, they want another year! If, sir, the rule of memories is to be adopted, we shall be sadly at fault, because there are Methodist preachers whose time would have to be extended to a life time, and they would hardly know the names of their people then. This would be ahead of our Canada brethren who have provided for extension of time to five years. And they, sir, have innovated upon the itinerancy, and Mr. Wesley's original plan.

But it becomes necessary, too, sir, to make sick men of the preachers in order to meet the demands of the times. And this is given as a reason why there shall be a new rule. Here, sir, is a glorious instance of bringing down the law to suit the state of morals. Shortening the decalogue—shortening the decalogue, sir, to meet the moral condition of society! A grand development this to be sure.

There were three things Mr. S. said he wished to remain untouched by the innovating progressive spirit of the times. First—The great charter of human salvation. Second—The organic law and constitution of this nation. Third—The Methodist Discipline as it is. When, however, pressing necessity demanded a change in church economy, then, and not until then, would it become proper to adopt such a modification as the times may indicate. "That may be old foggyism" said he. And he disclaimed all sympathy with the wild projects of Young America, whether unfledged or associated with grey hairs.

The plan of the English Wesleyans was characterized with all due respect for the worthy representatives on the platform, as a departure from the platform of original Wesleyan Methodism. There was an apology for this plan in

the fact that there they had no stations. But in New England, every thing is cut up into little patches so small, indeed, that each preacher from a little hill, might view at a glance the entire extent of their pastoral domain. Then it is an encroachment upon the spirit of our institutions. And in Old England he deemed it an innovation. The Canada brethren had found three years so good that five was thought better, and perhaps fifteen would be the limit yet to be fixed on.

The most radical objection Mr. S. had to the new rule, was that it made invidious distinctions between brethren. Now the more talented and acceptable preachers had to pass round just as their humbler brethren did. At one time, in the crowded chapel preaching to hundreds and thousands—then in the little school house, talking to a handful of poor blacks, they might be. This was the way to promote the life of the itinerancy. "Pass them round. Pass them round," said Mr. S.

The opposite tendency was directly leading to Congregationalism. And he wished that there was not a station in creation.

(Dr. Kennedy here breathed audible, "Have mercy on us.")

Mr. S. Continued further to examine the remarks made by others on the opposite side.

Dr. Kennedy—Many of us have been accustomed to regard the Baltimore Conference as the old dominion of *Methodism*. And we do respect her as having in the progress of the history of the church, deserved the testimony that she had most emphatically done well. Yet he had not for a long time before witnessed the exhibition of so real a specimen of fossil fogyism.

"I love that which is old. But while I love to gaze upon the stately tree, I also love to witness the bursting buds, and opening foliage of a young life renewed. I love the ancient, sir. No one is more delighted to stand on the brow of a hill, or gaze from the bank of a river, upon the flowing stream that travels the pathway of ages. But God is even grafting that which is young and new upon the ancient stock. And why shall we remain precisely where our fathers stood a half a century ago.

After a detailed review of the arguments adverse to a

change, and relating incidents of personal experience showing the adverse workings of the three year rule, the Dr. concluded by expressing the desire, that not only himself, but all that heard him might be enabled to say with Paul when addressing the flock they had served—"Therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." He was anxious to preserve the interests of the church, unimpaired in all their verdure, vigor and health.

A. M. Osbon, protested vehemently against further discussion. If it proceeded he had a speech to make.

A. Griffith, a venerable man of the Baltimore Conference deemed it proper to vindicate the memory of the dead from the aspersions and slanders thrown upon them during the discussion. He entered into "history of the olden time," describing and eulogizing highly the fathers who had passed away.

James Porter was sorry to say that in this as in all other discussions Br. Slicer points his finger at New England.

Mr. Slicer explained, that he had taken back his allusion to New England.

Yet sir, continued Mr. Porter, it remains true that the allusions to New England are constant and invidious, from the quarter I have named. It has not been four days since I heard in a sermon on the Sabbath day, the same thing repeated.

Now he would submit to that brother if it was not wrong to provoke sectional jealousies, and if that was the way to promote harmony and brotherly feeling. He would ask the chairman of the committee how many petitions had been received from New England.

Mr. Wilson rose and stated that they had received but one, and that was from East Maine.

Dr. Kennedy asked if New Haven was not in New England.

Now sir, this question is not agitated in New England. All is quiet here. There are those on this floor who believe that the Baltimore Conference is an innovator, the boldest of innovators upon the testimony and doings of our fathers. And how would it appear to them if these brethren were continually pointing at Baltimore and raising the cry of innovator.

"If," interrupted Mr. Sloan, "the brother can point to any innovations of Baltimore, let him do it, sir. We are ready to go into that question if necessary."

Mr. Collins hoped there would not be a sectional fight : desired to have sectional concord.

Mr. Porter—That's just what I desire—an end of this sectional warfare. As to the main question, he would not perhaps disagree much with Bro. Slicer ; yet he thought the present rule tied up Providence a little too much. As a Presiding Elder, he saw the sad consequences sometimes of removing a preacher. A case occurred the present year where a church was half built, and the sending of the preacher away was about fatal to the enterprise. Another, where a brother received about five hundred members during a powerful revival, and right in the midst of the glorious work he had to go to another field. Still he was unwilling to have the rule changed ; but if the rigor could be slackened a little, so that Providence could have a little lee way it would be better. Our brethren would be gratified if this can be done ; if not, they will be contented.

Mr. Collins believed, before God, that the Methodist people of New England did the best under the circumstances they could, and he did not believe that Br. Slicer intended to cast any odium upon the brethren of New England. He wished to make no sectional difference. He believed that they were as honest as the rest. There is no cause of strife between New England and us, we are brethren, and he hoped the banner of peace would wave over us. In regard to the question he said, if we send back the report to the committee with these instructions, the question will be tested by the reference. He was opposed to the instructions in every respect. The great want of success in our cities grows out of a departure from the practice of our fathers. He believed if we stood by the old landmarks, there would be no cause of complaint. Preaching Jesus Christ and soul-saving is our business, and not to pander to the rich. He believed with Mr. Wesley, that if we sought after the rich, we would lose our power by making them necessary to us. These were not to be neglected at any time, the poor never. He would rather have one poor converted man than a church of five hundred unconverted rich ones. Wesley began his mission among the colliers of Cornwall. He laid the foundation of the church

among the poor. A clergyman of another church once said "Methodism is adapted to the poor." He spoke the truth and I felt it no reproach. Jesus Christ said, as the crowning glory of the gospel above all miracles and prophecy, "the poor have the gospel preached to them." You may call me an old foggy if you please, but these are my sentiments. He did say no action should be taken here that should affect our relation to each other as Methodist preachers. He would not lose the individuality of Methodism, and he feared that there were movements in some places that indicate a departure from the ancient usages. He alluded to New York, where the brethren left the populous districts and moved up town for the purpose of building magnificent churches among the aristocracy. [Dr. Kennedy exclaimed that is incorrect.] This disposition to be like other churches was a sad evidence of defection from the genius and spirit of original Methodism. We must not come down as pioneers of the Gospel to imitate others. Mr. Wesley found the churches in this country in possession of Doctors of Divinity ; but he found in his band of pioneers, men who could stand up among them. Jesse Lee, with a missionary spirit, went to Boston and preached his first sermon under an ancient elm on the common. He did not wish to advocate a retrograde movement. The church was missionary and aggressive. She goes out, following the tide of emigration, and proclaims the Gospel in the log cabins of the wilderness. She has done more to make the mighty West what it is than all other agencies combined. Better be moved every year than sink down into a formalism. He entered his protest against striving to catch the people by splendid churches or splendid preachers, if it had the sanction of high authority, and he went with all his heart for seeking more religion himself, and praying that all his brethren might have more, and that the church might be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and we may go out armed with the Divine panoply, and plant the banner of the cross on the ramparts of hell itself. He had the highest respect for learning and learned men ; but learning don't give talent, genius, or ability ; Patrick Henry said natural ability is worth all the learning on earth.

Mr. Dodge remarked that it had seldom fallen to his lot to take part in a discussion. He conceived that an important question had been presented on a false issue. It was a prac-

tical question and one of great moment. For himself and colleague, he thought he could say, that they had the true spirit of Methodist ministers. Their field of labor extended from Albany to lake Erie in Western New York, and he believed it had furnished more laborers for the great missionary work than any other portion of the globe. Their preachers were in China and Oregon and California. He wished it distinctly understood that he was as much in favor of old fashioned Methodism as any one, and he wanted a stake stuck down at that point. As a Conference they yielded to none in their attachment to the doctrines and Discipline of the church. Their desire for a change did not strike at any essential principle of Methodism ; it was only in reference to those things where the church herself professes the doctrine of accommodation to circumstances. What would be adapted to Canada or New England, may not suit other parts of the work, and while we remained one in doctrine and essential principles of government, we may all be accommodated in these things which affect not our character as a church. We most conscientiously ask for the change contemplated.

Father Young opposed the change in a few remarks. Others uttered a few exclamations.

Dr. Drummond, of Virginia, called for the previous question, but not receiving a two-third vote, it was lost.

Mr. Gurley remarked that he was in favor of the motion. A great deal had been said that had no reference to the subject whatever ; and the only thing for which it was valuable was the amount of eloquence contained in the speeches, as a gratification to the spectators in the galleries. He denied that the measure proposed was a dangerous innovation. There is a necessity for the change, a strong necessity that demands it at our hands. Who can be the judges of the necessity of this measure if it be not the men who are stationed on the various fields of labor in our extended work ? Where, if not from them, shall we get a correct report ? If we must not legislate until fifty years hence, or until we can have the unanimous consent of the fathers, fifty years ago, improvement is all at an end. Our stations have greatly multiplied in number, and the better a minister becomes acquainted with his people the more efficient will be his service. The change asked for is not an innovation unequal in its bearings. The grand division of the church is into

circuits and stations. All know that water will find its level, and the remark holds good in regard to preachers; this will be the case though a change be made every year, and if any class would be favored it would be the brethren on our circuits, who have hardly an opportunity to preach at each point on their circuits more than twelve or twenty times. The rule would operate for the benefit of the church in every respect. We need not fear of Congregationalism; there is but little tendency in us to that direction. The Congregationalists are a useful and honorable body of Christians, but their government is not compatible with the itinerancy. He was attached to Methodism. His father was converted under the prayers of Wesley, and from him received license to preach. He had been, himself, in the itinerant field for years, and believed that itinerancy was the glory of Methodism. All that was said about our fathers was well, and the eulogies will look well in our conference paper, and do our people good to read them; indeed, our fathers would be ashamed of us if we forgot them or their work.

Mr. Hibbard remarked that he was ready to vote, and he believed all were ready before they came to Conference. All were informed on this subject, and no one needed a speech to enlighten him. No one required instruction from Baltimore or New England. He was unwilling that the motion should be put under the influence that has been waked up against it. The subject had no connexion with the fathers or congregationalism. The question is what should be our action on this subject in view of the wants of the church. There can be no doubt but the church will be benefitted in the way of extension and edification. He believed if the time were extended it would have a greater effect to develop the power of the ministry than all the Theological Schools in the world. He was in favor of Theological seminaries, but there would be nothing like it in developing resources that can be found in the extension of ministerial time. It will elevate and gage the talents of the ministry as well as gage the habits of industry to the law of necessity.—The church demands a change. The ministry is certainly not so wanting in resources as to exhaust them in two years. It is a law of mechanics, that what is gained in motion is lost in power. We want our system to move with sufficient velocity, but we wish to retain with it the power of

Archimedes' lever. He saw no tendency to Congregationalism—it was a mere matter of policy. He did not believe in legislating for Divine Providence, but in following the law of Providence. It was impossible to make affections and social influences spring up and mature in a few months; and the strongest hold a minister can have on a community, is from sympathy. He must enter into the feelings and understand the wants of the people among whom he labors. He was not a lazy man—he disclaimed it, and he would declare that if he could not furnish sermons and variety enough for three years, he would be ashamed of himself. We want an extension of time in the East Genessee Conference, and we ask it because our people demand it at our hands.

Mr. Livesey said a great deal of time was occupied on subjects of comparatively little importance. All that was proposed, was to express to Conference the principle under certain circumstances, in which the time should be extended for three years. This was claimed to be necessary. It was perhaps probable that in a great portion of our work the change is not wanted, but in another portion it is most wanted and most desirable. If circumstances justified the Bishop in appointing a preacher to a station a second year, why not a third year. He did not wish to impose on Baltimore or any other Conference the three years rule. They may if they choose, adopt the one year rule. In New England we are neither contentious nor dissatisfied,—we brought no petitions, and yet the arrangement contemplated would answer well under certain circumstances among us. We were a missionary church, and there is no disposition to change our aggressive character, but because we are, it is no reason we should continue to wear blankets for overcoats and preach in log cabins as our fathers did. We don't see the necessity of being put just now on an iron bedstead, or converted into a fossilized fogysm. The change is asked for respectfully and intelligently, and let them have it. Instances could be enumerated where scores of converts have been lost to the church by the want of such a rule. If it is not granted, there will be no explosion among us, but we would be greatly benefitted by having it.

Dr. Cartwright said he was lost in the fog of eloquence, and he thought the speakers, some of them, did not get

within a thousand miles of the question. If he was lost he wanted to know it, that he might get at the subject.

It was here intimated by the Chair, that as Dr. Ryerson and his colleague would soon leave, they be allowed to make a few remarks to the Conference.

Dr. Cartwright gave way, and Dr. Ryerson stated that as allusions had been made to Canada in regard to the itinerancy, he hoped the Conference would indulge him in a word of explanation. His experience had extended over thirty years, and the plan had worked beautifully. Some were at first opposed to the extension of time, but the increased and increasing success which has attended its operations, has removed every doubt. The missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church are allowed to remain for an indefinite length of time, and he was sure that was not in accordance with original Methodism. Yet no one complains, and this very principle is involved in that arrangement which it is contended by some, would destroy old fashioned Methodism. That we are opposed to the itinerancy in Canada has no foundation. In fact, we are as great itinerants there as anywhere; besides no one can be re-appointed to a circuit or station among us unless the people request it. It does not create invidious distinctions any more than the rule of one or two years. Some of our aged brethren are opposed because it is an infringement on ancient Methodism. The salary in Canada was \$200, but this was found not sufficient, and we raised it to \$250. This was as much an innovation as to change the rule in regard to the extension of time, and our people might more properly complain. But we could reply, the times have changed. You are now in better circumstances, live in better houses, ride in better carriages, and live better every way than they did, and it was right that their ministers should receive a better support. He looked upon Methodism as a child of Providence or a creature of circumstances, and though he would not suggest that any change be entered into rashly, yet, he thought a change, such as contemplated, could be made beneficially. He had been requested to make these remarks, and he hoped they would not be regarded in the light of an interference. He referred in conclusion to Dr. Hannah and his colleague in affectionate terms, and he hoped in taking his farewell of the Conference, that they should strive to labor together and allow nothing

to separate them. He hoped the Lord would keep them in the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace, and that he would make them a thousand more than they are, and that they might in the language of one, be instrumental in spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands.

Mr. Jones, the companion of Doctor Ryerson commenced by expressing his regrets. He had been pained to hear the insinuation that the Canada Conference were not sound Methodists, that they were innovators. He insisted that they were all devoted to the itinerancy, and yet were universally in favor of the change allowing an extension of time. It had now been in operation twenty years, with the best possible results.

When the Canada Conference was allowed to go off in 1828 they were few in number. They had three presiding elders—30 circuits—47 preachers and 8000 members. But from 1828 to 1834 '5 their progress was not proportionably as great as since the adoption of the three years rule. Now, however, they had 17 districts, extending from the Gulf of the St. Lawrence to the Pacific Ocean, and from the shores of the great Lakes that separate the United States and Canada northward to the Arctic Ocean. They now had 210 circuits and including superannuated men and preachers on trial 330 ministers. The membership had increased from 8000 to over 36000. They also had now about 100 houses of worship, some of them capable of holding from one to two thousand persons.

Thus more signally than before the change they had been prospered and increased. Not one of the circuits, not one of the preachers would be found willing to go back to the 2 year system. We said we are for progress. We would maintain the principle unimpaired, but vary our modes of carrying it out according to circumstances. And he declared himself firmly of the opinion that the proposed change, if adopted, would give a new impetus to the progress of the Methodist Church in the States.

With appropriate allusions to the kindness of the Conference, the Bishops and others, Mr. Jones resumed his seat.

H. Slicer disclaimed having charged that their Methodism was unsound.

Dr. Ryerson thought by implication he had.

H. Slicer repeated his conviction of the soundness of the

Methodism of the Canada brethren. He was happy to hear from them, and was prepared to examine the argument they based upon the success following the adoption of the plan. He was prepared to show that Methodism in the United States had transcended every other system in the ratio of its progress and wonderful success.

Dr. Cartwright resumed his speech. He hailed with great pleasure his beloved Bro. Ryerson and his colleague. He had the honor to be a member of the General Conference, when, as had been said, the Canada brethren were not driven away and did not run away, but peaceably withdrew, by consent of the parties. He wished the Canadian brethren were as orthodox on this question now as they were then. They then plead that the usages of the country required their withdrawal. All their prosperity could not be attributed to the change of time. The gist of the argument was wrongly directed. Their allusion to success was its failing. He could not but admire their wisdom, but not their honor. He was very happy to learn that the changes had produced good results in Canada, but it will not suit Methodism in the United States. He had the honor to be in the eleventh General Conference, and he would not throw himself back on the defense of the fathers. If their positions did not stand the test now, it was too late to enter upon a defense. For himself he would soon be out of the way of young aspirants and celebrated educated etherial Doctors of Divinity. Bro. Hibbard thought they had such an immense stock of divinity that they could not wear out in three years. He would hail such as heaven-favored men.

He knew something about these men. He was once called to N. York on the General Missionary Committee. There were preachers there who were about winding up their two years of service. They beset me at once to preach for them, assuring me their stock had run out. They absolutely proposed to hire me, and as I had lost money on the route by thieves, I struck a bargain, and got five dollars for one sermon, and a frank on the Railroad from New York to Albany. He was determined to sock it into them, and gained by the operation. The Doctors were good and talented men. As for himself, he could not make splendid sermons, nor could he be taken by surprise. The fact is, he was born in that fix. He went in for off-hand cracks—off-hand cracks

forever. With him it was crack and fire, either running or on the wing. Talk about the improvement of the Ministry ! for himself, he had not made any for fifty years, and notwithstanding all that, he had just as much popularity as he could wag under. He knew the road to popularity well but he never traveled it. He saw several take route, and they soon got the big head and it run into the stiff complaint. He never was idle.—He believed the idle man's head was the devil's workshop ; all might outpreach him, but he always managed to keep up with the times. He would say from principle and all his experience in traveling as a preacher, that such a change would trammel our work. He believed nine-tenths of innovations originated with the preachers. What error in doctrine and practice has not originated with them.—He joined the church in the O'Kelly storm, and fought through the radical battle, and the great secession of 1844. The changes may be of some importance to particular localities, but it will bring death and ruin on other parts of our work. It will create a feverish anxiety, and accomplish no good.

Mr. Bangs moved that when Conference adjourns it adjourn to meet at 3 o'clock ; and at the close of Dr. C.'s address the Conference adjourned.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference met in Wesley Chapel. Bishop Scott in the chair. The religious services were conducted by Dr. Power.

The journals were read and approved, after which the order of the day was taken up, which was to listen to a discourse from Dr. Hannah.

Conference adjourned to meet at Wesley Chapel at half-past 7.

Conference met, Bishop SIMPSON presiding.

Rev. Mr. Jobson, according to request, delivered a sermon before the Conference.

Conference adjourned.

#### THIRTEENTH DAY.

*May 15—Morning Session.*—Conference assembled at 8 o'clock, Bishop Baker in the Chair. The religious services were conducted by Mr. Thurston, of N. H.

The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Hull took his seat as a delegate in the place of Mr. Cooper, of Indiana.

Dr. Perry moved to take up the appeal of J. M. Snow, who had been deprived of his ministerial character by the Wisconsin Conference.

The case was then taken up, but was suspended, to receive petitions and memorials.

Mr. Rust, of New Hampshire Conference, presented a memorial from the Great Falls Church, on the subject of slavery.

Mr. Thurston, from same Conference, presented memorial on same subject.

Mr. Starks, of Troy Conference, presented a memorial on the subject of Itinerancy.

Dr. Floy, of New York Conference, presented a memorial on the extension of time.

Mr. Blair, of California Conference, presented a communication from Rev. L. Waugh.

Mr. Erwin, of Black River Conference, presented a memorial on the Presiding Elder question.

Mr. Bingham, from same Conference, presented memorials on Itinerancy and Slavery.

Mr. Bristol, of the Oneida Conference, presented a memorial on Slavery.

Dr. Bowen, of Oneida Conference, presented a memorial from Morris Chapel.

Dr. Chamberlayne, of Genesee Conference, moved a reference of so much of the minutes of said Conference as related to Slavery, to the Committee on Slavery.

Mr. Brockway, of Michigan Conference, presented a memorial on Slavery.

Mr. Jamison, of the Ohio Conference, presented a memorial.

Dr. Trimble presented the resolutions of the Ohio Conference on the course of Study.

Mr. Bennett, of the Wisconsin Conference, presented a memorial on the subject of slavery, and also a paper relating to the administration of one of the Bishops.

Mr. Leihy, of Wisconsin Conference, presented a memorial on slavery.

Mr. Hitchcock, of Rock River Conference, presented a memorial on slavery, and the Presiding Elder question.

Mr. Young, of Cincinnati Conference, presented a memorial on the extension of time and church insurance.

Mr. Walker, of same Conference, presented a memorial relating to change of boundary line.

Mr. Fowble, of same Conference, presented a petition from Ninth Street, Cincinnati, on subject of Presiding Elder question; also, on extension of time; also, on subject of slavery.

Mr. Wood, of S. E. Indiana, presented a petition from Messrs. Eddy and Snyder, in reference to an account held by the Book Concern against another party.

Mr. Holliday, of same Conference, presented a petition from J. W. Sullivan, in relation to a book claim.

Mr. Collins, of Baltimore, presented a remonstrance in relation to division of said Conference.

Dr. Sargent, of Baltimore, presented a petition from Bloomingdale circuit, protesting against the annexation of said circuit to Wyoming Conference; also, a copy of a petition of the said circuit, protesting against annexation presented to the General Conference in 1852.

Dr. Durbin presented a petition numerous signed, on the subject of lay representation from Philadelphia. Withheld until to-morrow, for the purpose of reading.

Mr. Thayer, of New England, presented a petition on slavery from Dedham, Mass.

Dr. Hibbard offered the following :

*Resolved*, That the Committee on Revisals and revision of Discipline, be and they are hereby instructed to report some method for revising the rituals of the Church.—  
Referred.

Mr. Phelps offered the following :

*Resolved*, That the report of the Committee on Revisals be instructed to inquire into the propriety of amending the formula on Baptism in our Discipline, page 110, by striking out the words "Holy Catholic Church," and substituting therefor, something that will not require a note of explanation. Referred.

Mr. Gorley was placed on the Committee on the Tract cause, in the place of Mr. Phelps; and also on the Committee on Education; in the place of Mr. Mattison.

Mr. Wilson presented the following :

*Resolved*, That the Committee on Revisals be instructed

to inquire into the expediency of altering the Discipline in regard to Trustees of our Church, so as to constitute them members of the Quarterly meeting Conferences by virtue of office. Referred.

Dr. Perry moved that the appeal of J. M. Snow be admitted. Carried.

After stating the grounds of the appeal, he offered the following :

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That in all cases of appeal from the action of an annual Conference, the papers to be used in evidence, and the charges and specifications upon which the appellant was tried in the annual Conference, should be specifically referred to and definitely identified by the journal of the Conference, signed by the presiding Bishops and Secretary of the Conference, and that no paper not so identified shall be read as evidence without the consent of the parties.

On motion, the resolution was laid on the table.

Dr. Kennedy presented the following :

*Resolved*, That in consequence of informality or deficiency in the records of the Conference in the case of J. M. Snow, the case be remanded back to the Conference for a new trial.

Mr. Cooper called for the previous question. Decided to be out of order.

The question was then put and the resolution adopted.

Mr. Hamilton moved that the report from the committee on Missions in relation to the appointment of a Bishop to Africa, be now taken up. Lost.

Dr. Parks moved that the unfinished business of yesterday be now resumed. Carried.

Mr. Pearne's substitute was then read, as follows :

*Resolved*, That we re-commit the report with instructions to report in favor of extending the time to not more than three years by the consent of the Annual Conference at the request of the Bishop presiding.

Mr. Finley being entitled to the floor, having had it at the time of adjournment, said he was not easily scared, but felt a good deal of trepidation. He never could shoot at a rest—all his shots were off hand. He wished to submit a few preliminaries. He had the honor of having belonged to

the largest conference in the country, and of having traveled one of the largest circuits. He had also the honor of being the first missionary the church sent to the Indians. On that mission, he had hard service and rough fare, having lived on raccoon meat and slept between an Indian and a big negro. Having made these preliminaries, he would pay his respects to the Canada brethren. He was sorry they were not present to hear his remarks. He learned that they had been sent here with Christian salutations, and he cordially approved of that part of their mission, but he was opposed to their entering into the discussion yesterday, and throwing themselves into the arena of controversy, on the extension of time. They said under the five years rule they had enjoyed great success. He was prepared to compare notes with them and oppose the two year rule to the five year rule. We have established a German Mission under the two year rule, which has outstripped the Canada church altogether. If the change in the rule is made, it will deter many young men from entering the itinerant field. He was told of two brethren who asked the opinion of a distinguished Judge in regard to Theological Seminaries; and his reply was, the more Doctors of Divinity you have the less Gospel you will have. Men from God's quarry were the best. He could point to men in this Conference, who, when they entered the ministry, had no more learning than they ought to have; but they went to work on their circuits, and in the woods in log cabins—they studied their grammars and text books, and now were among our finest scholars. He wished to call attention to an important consideration, and that was that the change was uncalled for, and that our people did not want it. If it is adopted it will break down original Methodism. He came into the Church when the preacher only received sixty dollars, and he took that in coon skins and other articles, and though we had improved in this respect as well as in others, it was under the operation of the old rule. He was satisfied this subject was only agitated in certain localities, and it should be postponed for four years. Let it go out to our people, and let them decide it.

Dr. Clark said that he had desired, from the outset in this discussion, to make a few remarks upon the question now before us; not that he had any deep feeling upon the subject, but as a member of the Committee, he wished to

bring out a few facts before the Conference. He wanted to say that he was not in favor of the change in our Discipline at the present time, and under the present circumstances. It was a plain and practical question before us ; and he did not see the propriety of loading it down with side issues. The insinuations about New England, or New York, or any other place, were irrelevant to the issue. It had also been represented that this measure was concocted by a class of Ministers whose fortune, for good or evil, it had been to pass through an Academic or Collegiate education, and who wished to provide places for themselves where their literary tastes might be indulged. The Doctor repelled the insinuation. The measure did not originate with these men ; and he said he had no doubt that there would be found to be a division of opinion among them on this, as on other measures. He did not look upon it as a question of radical innovation, but simply one of practical expediency. We were to decide the question simply with a view to the workings of our system, and the wants of our people. It had been intimated that the Committee had not fairly and fully looked into the matter as presented in the memorials and petitions ; that some had not been even noticed. The Doctor repelled the insinuation, and stated that the Committee had given patient attention to *all* the papers that had been put in their possession.

Dr. Kenneday here rose and remarked that he exculpated the committee from all blame in the matter.

Dr. Clark stated further that the matter had been before the New York Conference, and that conference had, by a very decided vote, instructed its delegates to oppose the extension of time to three years. He said the question had been discussed in our papers ; the people had been made acquainted with the issue, and what was the result ? Why, we have not two hundred petitioner, all told, for the change. This argues, to say the least, that the people are not anxious for the change. *They do not ask for it.* The movement ought to come from the people ; their voice ought to be heard ; and when it was heard in favor of a change, he would be prepared to act. To act now, and on our own motion—with no voice coming up from the church, or so feeble an one—would be premature. The call for a change on this point should come from the people, and not from the

ministry. Let the question then go back to the people, and when their voice is heard we shall be prepared to act.

Mr. Pilcher, of North Ohio, remarked that he was one of the modest members of the Conference, and it was difficult for him to get the floor. He did not wish to enter into an argnment involving the merits of the question. So much light had already been shed upon the subject that it would be a superfluous task to attempt to increase the amount of information. It had been asserted that a change of the rule was not only necessary but imperatively demanded by the people. He thought this was a slight misrepresentation of the subject.

If a change is desirable, let the people ask for it, and he would be among the first to advocate it. Let the whole subject go before our people in the length and breadth of the land, and then if they judge a change for the better, let them roll up their petitions; bnt till then we should not act, but let well enough alone.

Mr. Reddy rose to make an explanation. He said many references to the committee had not been transferred, and they had to act upon the papers before them.

Mr. Kinsley moved to strike out all that refers in the resolution to the action of Annual Conferences and the request of the-Presiding Bishop. He was in favor of this, and desired if the question was acted upon at all, it should be upon its own simple merits. He never could consent to giving an Annual Conference the power to ask a Bishop to make such appointments as were contemplated in the change of the rule.

Mr. Collins moved that when the question is taken on the substitute, the yeas and nays shall be called. Carried.

Mr. Porter, of New Jersey, moved that the main question be now put, and eighty-eight voted in the affirmative, and one hundred and twenty-two in the negative.

Mr. Collins moved that any member shall have the right to record his vote at any time. Carried.

The report was then taken up and the resolution was adopted.

The preamble was laid on the table.

Conference adjourned.

## FOURTEENTH DAY.

*May 16—Morning Session.*—Bishop Ames presided. The services were conducted by Dr. E. Thompson. His reading and manner of offering supplication is remarkably natural and very impressive.

Several votes were added to the yeas and nays on reference to instructing the committee to report a three years' rule. The vote stands now as follows—yeas 91, nays 126.

H. Bangs did not vote, but was not allowed to give his reasons. W. H. Brockway enquired if the Conference excused him. The Bishop said—having been outside of the bar when the vote was taken, it was optional with himself to vote or not as he pleased.

J. Dodge corrected an error in his reported statement about the extent of the field of labor in his conference.

Mr. Raymond deemed it his duty to call the attention of the conference to the remarks of the editor of the *Daily Advocate*. He then read the following remarks in reference to the General Conference :

"The subject of slavery we learn is in process of being prepared for Conference. It is believed by most that we have heard speak on the subject, that the view of it as given by the Bishops, will, in the main points, be sustained by the Conference. We do not expect any ultra decision, or one differing in any important point from the Discipline as it is. Indeed, whatever may be the decision we cannot see any just cause for severing the Church, as moderate views, in general, seem to bear sway."

I wish to say that it seems to me as an individual member of the body, that it is a matter of regret, that at this period in the proceedings of our Conference, and at the particular junction of affairs on the subject referred to, there should appear such an announcement in the official paper, published at the seat of the Conference. And if the reporter will insist in his report of to-days proceedings this expression of my regret, I will be satisfied. Otherwise I shall deem it necessary to ask for the passage of a resolution on this subject.

J. A. Collins concurred in the remark of Mr. Raymond.

It was voted that on Monday the Conference meet at 2 P. M. so as to have a quorum. Many would not return from their appointments at a distance before that.

N. Wilson from the committee on Itinerancy reported a request to be relieved from the further consideration of D. J. Snow's memorial. Agreed to.

By request of W. Hamilton, the Report No. 1, from the committee on missions was called up. The 1st resolution recommended the election at this Conference of a missionary Bishop for Africa. The 2d proposed, if the first plan be not deemed practicable that the Liberia Conference be requested to elect an Elder, whom the Bishops should ordain, with jurisdiction limited to Africa.

T. J. Quigly enquired if the proposition would not conflict with the itinerant *general* superintendency to create a special jurisdiction.

W. Hamilton thought that the general superintendency only related to the M. E. Church in the United States. This was argued at length.

J. A. Collins referred to the fact that the same thing had been tried in 1852. He expressed great surprise to hear his colleague allege that it would be no serious departure from the principles of the general itinerant superintendency. He remonstrated earnestly against overriding constitutional restrictions in this or any other matter. He also examined the arguments affirming that the general superintendency only related to the United States of America.

He was in favor of allowing the Liberia conference to elect and send a Bishop to this country for ordination. He argued the right of any body of Elders to elect a Bishop from among their own number.

J. P. Durbin observed in reply to Bro. Collins that the constitutional restrictions were to be understood by consulting the history and circumstances of the times when such constitution was made. And also that it was to be construed under the rule of necessity; as when the work to be superintended is remote as the case of India or Africa. He also called attention to the language of the Bishops in their address as corroborative of the view that the proposed election at this Conference was not unconstitutional.

J. A. Collins wished to reply at once, but this was objected to under the rule. Mr. Durbin said he did not want to be shot down by Bro. Collins. Collins retorted upon him that he was afraid to have his arguments examined. Durbin replied that he was opposed to any violation of the rule.

He would not himself exceed fifteen minutes nor ask for a second chance to speak on the same question. And he most emphatically exclaimed that he hoped no brother on the floor would do it either. To this many responded "Amen."

Wm. Hosmer expressed himself glad to get the floor for once. He then proceeded to protest against the constitutional argument against electing a Bishop for Africa. He spoke rather disparagingly of making constitutions such continual bugbears. If the constructive restrictions that constitutions are made to bear, were to be the limit of our actions, there would be precious little done in this world. He was in favor of giving Africa a Bishop. Set them up in this way for themselves, and let young Africa do as young America had done.

H. Slicer declared it a matter of astonishment that this matter of a missionary Bishop should be on hand again. It had been defeated three several times in 1840, at Baltimore, and then slept the sleep of death. It had a resurrection again at Boston in 1852, but came up such a skeleton that it was not deemed fit for decent society. He then proceeded to animadvert upon the revolutionary doctrine of Mr. Hosmer respecting constitutions. "A constitution what is it? A mere combination of rags and lampblack to be torn into shreds and spit upon!"

(Mr. Hosmer disclaimed having said or intimated any such thing.)

Mr. Slicer continued arguing the restrictions of the constitution respecting the superintendency.

R. Sapp wished to ask a question. The speaker consented.

*Question*—Do you hold and argue that there are constitutional restrictions limiting the power of this body?

*Answer*—I certainly do.

*Question*—Does Bro Slicer recognize the righteousness of the decision of the Supreme Court of these United States, which declares the action of this General Conference of supreme authority?

Mr. Slicer did not clearly apprehend the question, but if it related to the binding character of the decisions of the Supreme Court he would answer that no good citizen will hesitate to admit its binding authority.

The discussion of the point was resumed, and an opinion expressed in favor of the second resolution.

H. Matteson wished the reporters specially to note the fact, that for the first time in two weeks the floor has been assigned to him. (A voice "so may the rest of us who have not had it, when we do get it!")

Wm. Cooper intimated that the floor was always assigned to those who deserve it!

H. Slicer declared that Mr. Mattison's remark was a reflection on the chairman. Mr. Mattison disclaimed any such design. He meant to complain of no injustice.

Mr. President, said he, in the discussions occupying this General Conference I have observed that certain brethren are invariably acting the part of brakemen on the railroad. It is their work to break up the train in every question. Just as soon as they hear the whistle, they settle back and bear down on the lever. At one time it is "the constitution," then its "congregationalism" or it may be "old fashioned Methodism."

After this philippic Mr. M. reviewed the arguments of those who opposed the reports. He favored the report, giving a history of the proceedings in 1852; and also argued the right to do what was proposed from the language of the Discipline.

J. Kennedy, urged the importance of the question, and also, the importance of adhering to the constitution. Yet, the necessity of this case, and the authority to provide for it, he set forth in an able manner. The action of the General Conference of 1828, provisionally arranging for the ordination of a bishop for Canada, though it was never consummated, had recognized the authority. If it existed then, it exists now, was the argument.

A. M. Osbon, urged that it was not a constitutional matter, but a mere question of expediency, and not to be determined by the technicalities of a legal argument. He favored the report.

G. R. Crooks, presented a carefully elaborated argument drawn from the history of the organization—from the Episcopal address preparatory to the discipline—from the directions respecting the election and consecration of bishops—the duties of Presiding Elders—where the Episcopal prerogative is named to show that the restriction relating to

the General Superintendency could only be applied within the limits of the United States.

P. Cartwright, made a characteristic speech against the report. During its progress he showed very clearly that the principle involed in the proposed election and ordination of a bishop for Africa, would require a similar arrangement for Germany, South America and elsewhere.

("Amen" shouted several voices.)

Oh, yes, I dare say you would like to go there as bishop, many of you ! (roars of laughter.) And God knows I wish you were there, for I would like to get rid of you ! Sir, without their help, who are so bent on changing the discipline to suit themselves, the old ship would right up again, come back to her moorings, and be more safely anchored in the harbor at last.

F. G. Hibbard was ready to vote, if there was no more discussion. He had a few remarks to offer. After an explanatory remark in relation to his friend, Mr. Hosmer, whose views he fully endorsed, he presented the suggestion that the Conference do now initiate a movement, looking towards a change of the restrictive rule, by the concurrence of the Annual Conferences. It could be done in a few months, and meet the constitutional objections:

J. S. Porter, presented a substitute varying the form, but embodying the principle of the second item of the report. This renewed the discussion, in which several took part. A collision occurred between Dr. Durbin and J. A. Collins, calling forth a few flashes of mental electricity with very slight thunder.

J. A. Collins, took occasion to say a word in reply to Mattison's allusion to "brakemen." He cordially accepted the epithet, and deemed the position an honorable one. He pursued the argument in detail, favoring the substitute of J. S. Porter.

The substitute of J. S. Porter, and the suggestion of Hibbard, were referred to the Committee on Missions, by a vote of 112 to 67.

Memorials were presented on the Presiding Elder question—in favor of a cheap edition of the Bible—one for Lay Delegation from Philadelphia—one on the same from Geneva, N. Y.—and still another from New York Conference on the same.

These were referred amid great confusion. It was impossible to maintain order. Bishop Ames, sat down after some futile efforts, saying in reply to numberless cries of "Mr. President," I will not recognize any one until the Conference has come to order. "Sit down, sit down," said he, I will not preside in a mob. Good, good, exclaimed several.

After a brief report from the Committee on Sunday Schools, providing for a public anniversary on Wednesday next, which was adopted, the Conference adjourned.

#### FIFTEENTH DAY.

*May 17—Morning Session.*—Conference assembled at the usual hour. Bishop Waugh in the chair. The religious exercises were conducted by Mr. Coombs, of Philadelphia.

The journals of yesterday were read and approved.

P. Cartwright asked that the order of the day be suspended, that he might ask of Conference a copy of the memorial of D. J. Snow, and the action of the Conference. Granted.

The report of committee on Sunday Schools was taken up and amended by striking out Wednesday and inserting Thursday.

James Porter offered the following preamble and resolutions:

WHEREAS many hundreds, if not thousands, of our members are annually lost from our church by not presenting their notes of recommendation when they remove from one circuit to another; and therefore,

1. *Resolved*, That the committee on revisals be and hereby are instructed to inquire if some measure may not be devised by which this evil may be remedied.

Referred to committee on revisals.

2. *Resolved*, That the Discipline be amended by striking out "*up*," page 29, in the sentence, "By running with patience the race which is set *up* before them." Also by striking out "and worn out preachers," page 41, fifth line from the top.

Referred to Committee on Revisals.

3. *Resolved*, That the Discipline, part 1st, chapter 4, section 1st, question 3, answer 3, page 41, immediately following the words, "Seminaries of learning, which are or may be under our superintendence, be amended by the insertion of

these words: Except, also, in special cases where he shall judge that the best interest of the work require it, he may continue a preacher in the circuit or station the third year, provided, that the Annual Conference, voting on the case, by his request, shall require it.

Laid on the table.

Dr. Durbin offered a resolution, That it shall be the duty of each Annual Conference annually to arpoint a committee to audit the accounts of each superintendent of missions within its bounds, and report to the Conference. Referred.

Mr. Hamilton presented a report from Committee on Missions as follows :

The committee on missions, to whom was recommitted their Report on the appointment of a Missionary Bishop for Liberia, having reconsidered said Report and other papers referred to them, beg leave to report.

*Resolved*, That we recommend to the several Annual Conferences to alter paragraph 3, section 2, part 1, by adding the words after the word Superintendency in the fourth line —“but may appoint a Bishop for any of our Foreign Missions, limiting his Episcopal jurisdiction to the same.

*Resolved*, That we recommend and authorize the Liberia Annual Conference, under the direction of the Bishop having Episcopal charge of said Conference at present, assisted by the Corresponding Secretary, to elect an Elder in good standing in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and present him for ordination to the Bishops, or any of them, who are hereby authorized to ordain such person so elected, certifying in the parchment of ordination that his Episcopal jurisdiction is expressly limited to Africa. Nevertheless, the said Liberia Conference shall be under the general supervision of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as our Foreign Missions now are : *Provided*, That our Bishops, or any one of them, shall not ordain any man a Bishop for Africa until after the concurrence of the several Annual Conferences shall have been obtained, as provided in the first resolution.

Laid on the table for one day, according to rule.

Also a report on the German Mission.

Laid over by rule.

Also in regard to a Book Concern in Germany,  
Which was laid over.

Also, on division of the missionary organization as follows :

We considered the memorial from the New England Conference as to a division of the Missionary Organization into Foreign and Domestic Missionary Societies, and recommend that the suggestion in the memorial be not adopted, for the reason, that in our opinion, it would reduce the aggregate receipts, and make an undue division of the receipts between the Foreign and Domestic work in favor of Foreign Missions.

Mr. Hitchcock thought the matter should have due deliberation. He thought the missionary funds in the west would be increased by the division contemplated, and he was in favor of such division. He admitted that in the west they received more than they contributed, but their field embraced German and Swedish missions.

Mr. Nichols apprehended that the nature of the memorial, as it did not come from that section of the work, was not distinctly understood, and he called for a reading of the report. Mr. N. said the report was adverse to another organization, and he thought it would tend to decrease the amount of funds.

Mr. Reed, of Iowa, rose to make an explanation. The remarks of Mr. H. he considered were inappropriate, as all the wants of the section to which he alluded were supplied.

Dr. Drummond stated that the very same proposition which was now before them was before the General Conference at the last session, and he did not think it of sufficient importance to consume time, as they were ready to vote.

Mr. Walker wished to inquire if the separate organization would involve the necessity of separate officers of the society, and the expense attendant thereon.

Dr. Dnrbin replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Hill thought it would be better to let the subject alone, at least for the present.

Mr. Crews did not precisely comprehend the report. His impression was that the division of organization would greatly increase the funds for both the home and foreign work. They did not complain that they had not received enough—would not complain if they had not received as much as had been appropriated. If they could see their money expended

under their own direction they would contribute more largely.

Mr. Heath hoped the views advocated by the brother would not be the sense of the General Conference. It would be an easy matter to set up sectional claims. Money could be collected if the people were satisfied there were no leaks. If we have another organization, with its officers and salaries at \$2,000 per year, it would work disastrously. It was now difficult to raise funds, and if we have saddled upon us another organization, our tongues will be tied.

Mr. Haney said he was from the West, and a Western man. He was in favor of the resolution and let the matter remain as it is, and all his colleagues were of the same opinion. They had received from the Missionary Society more than they wanted. He alluded to one instance in which they had received \$200 more than they needed for their work. He was firmly of the opinion, that if some of the Missions were stricken from the list and thrown upon their own resources they would support themselves. He was happy to say that the Rock River Conference had the honor of sweeping from the mission list into the regular work all such whenever it can be done. He believed that the more mission stations they had, the more they were cramped in their missionary operations. He spoke advisedly, and knew perfectly well whereof he affirmed. The missionary society gives us \$1,500, and if they give us \$4,500, it would not accomplish as much good.

Mr. Thayer remarked that as a member of the Missionary Committee representing the Conference from which the memorial came, he would say that the reason on which the memorial is based is not that they did not get a fair proportion of the missionary funds in their section of the work. The people in that field are all the firmest friends of the missionary enterprise. The great question was,—how can the most money be raised for missionary purposes, and what is the best plan to bring about such a result? He wished to be relieved of what might seem an inconsistency in going before the people and urging the claims of the heathen while two-thirds of all the amount collected is appropriated to the home work among a people whom some think are abundantly able to help themselves. We find among us two classes of persons. To the

first class belong those who are in favor of foreign missions alone. They are among our most intelligent and useful members and keep themselves posted in regard to our missionary operations. The other class belong to those who are in favor of domestic missions, and they think and act upon the principle that charity begins at home. Such will give nothing to the general cause: One great purpose said Mr. Thayer, which we have in view in seeking a change in our missionary operations, is to meet both these classes and thus promote the two great objects. We believe that within the borders of our Conference more money can be raised for each of these objects than is now raised for both. The organization of a Domestic Missionary Society will not involve the creation of any new agencies, though it might require some additional officers. He believed that the Superintendent of the foreign work had enough to do to attend to that department alone. He thought the arrangement contemplated would best subserve the interests of the general work.

Mr. Crary said he would not spoil the gentleman's speech and the speeches delivered by others on this subject, but he wished to call attention to the Constitution, which gives to every donor to the Missionary Society the privilege of designating where the money should be applied; and having the power to give direction to their donations it was not necessary to have any action on the subject.

Mr. Thayer replied that the provision did not reach the case at all.

Dr. Trotter said he was opposed to any change contemplating a new organization with its salaried officers.

Dr. Rice moved the previous question, which was carried, and Conference proceeded to vote upon the several items.

Dr. Raymond, from the committee on Slavery, reported in part as follows:

That certain papers relating to the Tract Cause have been referred to the Committee on Slavery. That they consider themselves sufficiently employed in considering the main question committed to them—that the same subject contained in said papers has been referred to the Committee on the Tract Cause. They, therefore, ask that all papers relating to the Tract Cause be referred to the Tract Committee.

The report was adopted.

Dr. Bowen, from the committee on the Bible Cause, presented a report.

Mr. Pearne, of Oregon, moved that Rev. Dr. Holdich, Cor. Sec. of the American Bible Society, be requested to address the Conference.

The Dr. was introduced, and remarked that he was happy in being permitted to appear before them in behalf of the great cause in which he was engaged. He said the Methodist Church was deeply interested in the American Bible Society, inasmuch as they had recognized it as the organ through which they circulated the Scriptures, both at home and abroad. The General Conference, he remarked, had a right to know all about its operations, and he would submit a few plain, brief facts in relation to the organization, policy, and operations of the society. The Dr. here alluded to the beginning of the Beginning of the Bible Society in New York, when it occupied a room twenty feet square, and one of the friends of the cause at that day, sanguine of its success, said he believed the time would come when he would see that whole room (twenty feet square) filled with Bibles. From thence, the Society removed to Nassau Street, and continued operations there until they printed, bound, packed, and sent off, at the rate of three thousand Bibles per day. This house becoming too small, a larger one was erected in Astor Place, where seventeen presses are employed, and from two to three hundred hands, and they were prepared to print five thousand Bibles per day, or seven for every minute of the working hours of the day. He called the attention of the Conference to the wants of the Society. They not only want money, but they want an outlet for their Bibles. The supply would not increase beyond the demand, and he hoped the ministers would seek out the destitute. He would state one fact that might not be fully known, that the new American Bible House has not cost the Church one cent. It was erected by citizens of New York, and nothing was deducted from the resources of the Society or money raised for the circulation of Bibles. The Bible House was yet somewhat in debt, but from the rents accruing from the stores and offices, in a few years, that debt will be entirely liquidated.

Mr. Flower made some remarks in relation to taking up collections in aid of the funds of the society, and the propri-

ety of having this attended to by the ministers instead of the county agents, who were paid a salary.

Dr. Bowen explained. He said it was not true that the officers of the County Bible Societies were paid for their services, and the object of the Parent Society was, to do away with the employment of local agents as far as possible.

Mr. Reed remarked that he had the honor of being a member of the Agency Committee at New York. The Board had not long since entered into a full and thorough investigation of the whole subject of agencies. As the result of their deliberations, they came to the conclusion that they could not be dispensed with, as many places would never contribute a cent unless they were visited by agents. They were important also in organizing auxiliaries, and keeping those already in existence from becoming entirely extinct. He was ready to adopt the report as it was, as all its features met with concurrence.

Mr. Kinsley moved that the report be amended so as to read "but do not request special agents to be sent among us for the purpose of raising collections." He remarked that these agents never came into the congregations without the pastor being present, and it was his opinion that if the pastor was left alone to do his work, it would be done better than the agents could do it, and that too, without taxing the Society, and thus taking the money raised for the printing and circulation of Bibles. If an agent gets a salary of \$500, and the same amount can be raised without him in the churches, that sum will be saved. But suppose it was only \$200, that sum would print eight hundred Bibles. He was a friend to the Bible Society and a friend to the circulation of Bibles, and believed we could raise money without agents.

Mr. Nichols thought it was well enough to study economy, but he would suggest if it was not rather too delicate a subject to touch in the way proposed. He therefore moved to lay the proposed amendment on the table. Carried.

Mr. Crawford said he looked with painful interest on the manifest neglect by our ministers of the auxiliary societies. Whenever he had connected himself with them, he found a perfect willingness on the part of those associated with them to receive him, and they regarded the Methodist church as a strong and powerful element in those societies. If we

lose our influence in the Bible Society it is by neglecting the auxiliaries. He attended one meeting where there were only two Methodist ministers present, while there were thirteen Presbyterian ministers,—another where there were four of the former, and eleven of the latter. He urged attention to this subject. The design of agencies was to cultivate those fields where the churches did not operate, and they certainly would not intrude themselves unasked into fields where the pastors attended to their duty. He trusted nothing would occur that would have the slightest tendency to lessen the hold of the church upon the society.

Mr. Pearne wished to ask Dr. Holdich a question. A persistent effort is made on the behalf of the Tract Society to blend the two societies in their system of colportage. He wished to know how far this was in accordance with the policy of the American Bible Society?

Dr. H. replied that they desired to cherish the most friendly relations with the Tract Society, but they were unanimously of the opinion that each should act separately and stand alone on their own merits.

Mr. Bangs moved that the Secretary of the Conference be instructed to furnish a copy of the report for the Managers of the American Bible Society. Carried.

Mr. Slicer presented the following :

The Committee on Temperance beg leave to present the following brief Report :

The ultimate point to which the Temperance Reformation has attained, is but that which was first taught in our General Rule. All the progress that has been made, by the light of its own investigations, and the success of its principles, has disclosed no new sentiments for us to affirm, nor any additional rule for us to propose.

It should be to us a matter of unfeigned rejoicing, that the sentiments of our church in reference to intoxicating liquors, have, to so large an extent, prevailed in the community.

They form the staple of action and furnish the motives in regard to them.

We hail, as the indication of the manner of Christ's reign throughout the nations, that the principles of Christianity embody themselves in civil enactments, and we see herein our duty intimated.

Not by Legislation is public sentiment to be manufactured, but this must first exist and then put forth the law. In no otherwise can law have authority, and be insured of stability. The sphere of our duty lies always with the public mind ; and so long as sin seeks to reign, can any Legislative action substitute our efforts.

Your Committee would submit the following Resolutions :

*Resolved*, That the cause of Temperance has undiminished claims upon the sympathies and activities of the Ministry and membership of the Methodist Episcopal church.

*Resolved*, That whilst the ultimate issue of all right and well directed Temperance effort, is the legal interdiction of drunkenness and of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks, such an issue should not be prematurely hastened—not until public sentiment is thoroughly leavened with the conviction of its propriety and need.

*Resolved*, That we earnestly recommend, as essential to the prevalence and permanence of the Temperance Reform, the renewing of public meetings and associated efforts to promote Total Abstinence.

Mr. Wilson moved that it be laid on the table in order to be printed. Carried.

Mr. Mattison presented the following :

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this General Conference, it is not necessary, so far as our Annual Conferences are concerned, that a special General Delegate should be employed by the American Bible Society, to visit us at our annual sessions.

In offering and advocating this resolution, said Mr. M., I wish it distinctly understood that I am no enemy of the American Bible Society. On the contrary, I am now, and have been for years, one of its warm and fast friends ; and *because* I am a friend to the Institution, I feel myself bound to do what I can to correct a line of policy, which if pursued, will do it incalculable if not irreparable injury.

Is it right and honest to collect money from our people to print Bibles and Testaments for the destitute, and then allow a large part of it, if not the whole of it, to be swallowed up by traveling agents? For one, I am opposed to this whole system, by ourselves or in company with others, now and forever. I have been opposed to it for many years, and with the views I entertain, I can never cease to be op-

posed to it, till I cease to be an honest man. The main business of the General Delegate of the American Bible Society, if I understand it, is to visit the Annual Conferences of our Church, and tell us our duty to that institution. Now, we can all read. We have the Annual Reports of the American Bible Society, and study them, and know all about that Society. Is it necessary then for a General Delegate to go out from New York to Maine, and Genesee, and Erie, and Iowa, at an expense of some \$3,000 a year, including salary and traveling expenses, to do this work of supererogation? I think not. Every such visit of a General Delegate to an Annual Conference, costs the American Bible Society, or rather the Conference thus visited, in the neighborhood of one hundred dollars of its Bible money, on an average. This use of our funds has already created much dissatisfaction among our preachers and people, and will create still more, unless that more than useless office is discontinued. It is my sole conviction, that it has cost the American Bible Society ten thousand dollars already of funds that would have been sent to its treasury, but for the creation and operations of this office. And I believe this is the *time and place* for the M. E. Church to indicate to the American Bible Society, that the visits of such General Delegates to our Annual Conferences, are of no practical utility. In all kindness of feeling, therefore to the American Bible Society, and all its Secretaries, Agents, and General Delegates, I hope the resolution pending will be adopted, and that our preachers may henceforth be allowed, as a general rule, to take their own collections at their own convenience as to time, and in their own way, and that we may be spared, as far as possible, the support of all unnecessary officers and agents.

Mr. Bangs rose to a question of order, viz. whether it was in order to introduce a resolution under the head of petitions and memorials. The chair decided that it was not.

Mr. Griffin moved to suspend the order of the day. Carried.

Mr. Munroe said he thought the resolution was not in the proper place. The Conference had no right to direct the Society in regard to its operations. He objected to considering the matter. Do not our ministers belong to the Bible Society? and is not that the place to go and give our ad-

vice? He did not regard it courteous for the General Conference to interfere in this.

Mr. Hall remarked that the resolution was exactly the thing they needed. The office was created for the special benefit of the Annual Conferences.

Mr. Reed thought his brother did not understand the matter. The Corresponding Secretary has been in the habit of visiting the Annual Conferences, but the duties of his office had become so onerous that it was impossible for him to continue in that work.

Dr. H. in explanation, said that it was the practice of the Methodist Church to have the Corresponding Secretaries visit the Annual Conferences, and not the practice of other churches in their ecclesiastical assemblies, hence to meet this, the appointment was made.

Mr. Hall resumed. He said, the explanations which have been given showed that he was correct, and that as he had stated, the office was created specifically for the Annual Conferences. Other churches he was told, did not need them, and he claimed that Methodist Ministers were just as capable of transacting business without such foreign assistance as other churches. He thought it time that we were thrown more upon our own resources than to depend upon imported agencies. He thought this was the place, the very place to attend to this matter, because the Annual Conferences here represented, were alone concerned. We have expressed our hearty co-operation in the American Bible Society, and it is because we take so lively an interest in its welfare we thus speak. They have appointed us a special guardian, and the Troy Conference prayed to be saved from such an infliction.

Mr. Cox said we had no desire to interfere with any arrangement of the Bible Society in sending delegates to attend anniversary meetings, but we have a right to say whether these annual visits shall be made to the Conferences. It was the expressed sentiment of the Pittsburgh Conference that such visits were neither needed or acceptable, as they had been bored enough by agents at Conferences.

Mr. Dodge said he heartily voted for the report, and was ready to give the Bible Society a cordial co-operation. The preachers and people in his field of labor were fully enlightened on the subject. He was in favor of the resolution.

They did not need any agents, because they divert the attention of the Conference from their legitimate work. Frequently we have as many as six special agents at Conference, and it was often difficult to wedge in appropriate and important Conference business. This was an important question, and he was opposed to the appointment of men to bore them. He dissented from this feature of the operations of the Bible Society, and hoped the resolution would prevail.

Mr. Wilson thought the action contemplated, rather immodest and obtrusive. If any felt aggrieved there was a proper place for them to go with their grievances. There was another course of managing, and he not only deemed this modest, but irrelevant.

Dr. Drummond said the Conference to which he belonged was not aggrieved at the appearance of Delegates ; and hence, he had no special objection to the appointment.

Dr. Parks remarked that he did not think it was discourteous to the Bible Society. We are, said the Doctor, part and parcel of that Society. They have presented their report, and ask our views and co-operation. If we don't need special agents for our enlightenment, we of course can say so. We could get along if we were only occasionally visited by them, and they did not consume too much of our time, but such is not the case : we must set apart special occasions, and if this thing is to be continued we will be obliged to protract our session for two weeks. We can attend to our own work in the Oneida Conference. It was a matter of complaint that stationed preachers had scarcely an opportunity of preaching to their people, they were so annoyed by Agents. They have had the matter under advisement whether it would not be well to have the Bishops leave some appointments to be supplied, and send the Agents there.

Mr. Cooper of Philadelphia thought light enough had been thrown upon the subject, and he would move the previous question, which on being put was carried, and the resolution was adopted.

Dr. Osbon moved to take up the regular order of the day, and presented a resolution in relation to the nomination of candidates for election to attend the British Wesleyan and Canada Connexions. Adopted.

Bishop Waugh presented a communication from the Gar-

rett Biblical Institute ; also, a paper written within and without, which in some respect resembled an ancient roll, on a scheme of emancipation. Both referred.

The Bishop also presented a request that the delegates of the several Annual Conferences copy the times of holding their conferences, and also to state when they desired a change of time, and hand the copies over to the Bishops.

Mr. Culver, of the N. H. Conference, presented a petition on revision.

Mr. Griffin, from same Conference, a memorial.

Mr. Starks, from Troy, on boundaries.

Mr. Reed, of New York East, presented memorials from Brooklyn, against action on slavery.

Mr. Bangs presented remonstrances from Allen Street Church against change of rule on slavery.

Mr. Merwin, from New York and Brooklyn, memorials against action on slavery.

Mr. Webster, of Vermont, presented memorial requesting action on slavery.

Mr. Erwin presented memorial from Syracuse on extension of time.

Mr. Bingham presented a memorial on revision.

Mr. Mattison presented a memorial from West Winstead, Connecticut, signed by S. W. Cox, and eleven other official members, praying for the extension of the term of ministerial service in the same charge to three years ; and also for a modification of the Presiding Elder's office.

Mr. Pillsbury, of East Maine, presented a memorial on Slavery, asking action.

Mr. Hawkins presented a memorial from Cleveland and Akron, on extension of time

Mr. Hibbard, from Ovid, N. Y., presented a memorial on the modification of Presiding Elder's office. Also one on extension of time.

Mr. Snapp, of Mich., presented a memorial on the subject of Slavery.

Mr. Crews, of R. River. presented a memorial on boundaries. Also on church extension, which was read and referred to a special committee of five.

Mr. Disbrow moved that Conference be prolonged.—Carried.

Mr. Harris asked that the appeal of Oliver Burgess be made the order of the day for Wednesday next. Carried.

Mr. Young presented a memorial from Mr. Edgar Conklin, of Cincinnati, on Lay Delegation, which was referred. Also on Presiding Elders question Referred.

The memorial of Mr. Samuel Williams, which had been laid on the table was taken up and read, and referred to a special committee of five.—It related to a cheap commentary.

Mr. Reed, of Iowa, presented a memorial on Boundary.

D. Wise presented memorial on revisions of Discipline and Slavery.

Mr. Livesey presented a memorial on Slavery.

Mr. Disbro presented a memorial on the subject of Boundary.

Mr. Triplett offered a resolution referring certain questions to the committee on the Court of Trials and Appeals.

Mr. Wakefield offered a resolution relating to Revision.

Mr. Mattison offered the following :

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of this body be instructed to furnish to Rev. Dr. Holdich a copy of our action this morning, in relation to the office of General Delegate of the American Bible Society.

Mr. Hall offered a resolution respecting a revision of the 10th rule of the Conference. While pending,

Conference adjourned.

#### SIXTEENTH DAY.

*May 19, Afternoon Session.*—Conference met, pursuant to adjournment, at 2 o'clock P. M., Bishop Morris in the chair. The religious exercises were conducted by Mr. Leiby. The journals were read and approved.

Bishop Morris remarked that as the Representatives of the British Conference were about to leave the seat of the Conference to return to their native country, he expressed a desire that they might be permitted at this time to take their leave of the Conference.

Dr. Hannah then rose and addressing the President, remarked that he desired he would receive for himself and for his respected colleagues, and all the members of the General Conference, the warmest expression of gratitude for the kindness they had received at their introduction ; and the same

kindness which had been continued to them during their stay. They trusted that the Delegates which should be appointed to attend the session of their Conference by this body, will meet with the same large-hearted kindness.

The Doctor remarked that the great object of their visit was to promote a greater union between English and American Methodism. They did not feel willing to enter into any discussion in regard to question which might agitate them, and which they could not fully understand unless they were more acquainted with the country, and the nature and genius of its institutions. Their exclusive object was to express their warmest regards, and they most sincerely prayed that Methodism on both sides of the Atlantic might be one. He was peculiarly struck with one thing and that was, that in doctrine and spirit and aim, Methodism in America was in accordance with the church in its primitive days. He prayed that the Lord God of their fathers might be among them, and that they might ever possess the same spirit and apostolical zeal that characterized those whose footsteps they were following. He admired the manner in which Methodism adapted itself to the circumstances by which it was surrounded. He thought of the sentiment advanced by Bengelius, and adopted by Mr. Wesley, that religion was like the air which yields to all bodies, and yet penetrates and pervades all bodies, so with Methodism it was yielding and accommodating, yet penetrating and all-pervading. The Dr. remarked that there were some plans of operation adopted by the church here, which of course differed from their plans, but though the plans differed, the great ends were kept in view. He was gratified with the tone and sentiment of the Conference, and the general spirit which prevailed among the members, and he hoped that it would remain throughout the entire sittings of the body. He was not ignorant of the fact that questions of deep and stirring interest would come before them and claim their investigation, but he trusted they would be able by the help of God to meet those questions, and dispose of them to the benefit and spiritual prosperity of the church. He would also express his gratitude for the kind and hospitable manner in which the Irish delegates were received. He loved those brethren much. He was strongly attached to Mr. Scott and his old pupil, Mr. Arthur, who had been with us, and to Mr. Cather.

He also felt grateful for the interest the American Church had taken in their mission at Fejee, and spoke most feelingly of the Missionary who had labored with such zeal and devotion as to become an old man at thirty-five. He alluded to the difficulties there, and to the timely interference in its behalf. He prayed that the Lord God who had raised up the Methodists as a people to show forth his praise in the earth might be kept by his power, that he who had kept the old ship with its rigging and enabled it to breast the storms through which it had passed, would bring it to the haven, that the God of heaven would be with us and pour out his spirit, and that from Passamaquoddy to the Pacific the light and truth of salvation might spread. He then addressed Bishop Morris, and said, I now take my leave of yourself and your respected colleagues, and the members of the Conference, and may the God of all grace guide you in your deliberations and preserve you to His heavenly kingdom.

After he had concluded, Mr. Jobson rose and delivered with much feeling, a farewell address. He said, when he had the honor of being first introduced to the Conference, he did not know what to say ; and now, after he had gone in and out among them for seventeen or eighteen days he was still at a loss. He must use strong language as expressive of his feelings, and say : Fathers and Brethren, I love you. He could give strong reasons for his attachment. He loved them as fellow-laborers in the gospel field. He loved them for their free, outspoken manner. He loved freedom of thought and freedom of speech, as

“ Thoughts shut up would spoil  
Like bales unopened to the sun.”

Free, open, undaunted discussion was always dear to him. He loved them for the devout spirit they manifested in their deliberations as well as in their labors for the salvation of souls. He might say with his friend, he loved them for the kind and generous manner in which they had received and treated him. He loved the Bishops for their gravity and wisdom, and for the zeal they manifested in the cause of God. He loved the old men, the fathers and the young men, and he wanted to say to those venerable men, we will not leave Methodism worse than we found it. These young men are strong, zealous, self-sacrificing, and he was happy to say they had the same kind in his country. The speaker here

alluded most feelingly to Mr. Hunt, the Fcejeean Missionary, of his early life and training, and related some amusing anecdotes and thrilling passages in the life of that devoted man that produced a powerful impression upon the Conference. He thanked God that the great brotherhood of Methodism was one, and he would join his friend in praying that the General Conference would send to their Conference delegates frequently, that England and America might be united Methodistically. They were one in language, and religion, and he prayed that they might remain one for ever. He was now four thousand miles away home, and yet he saw before him Englishmen and Englishwomen that made all things look familiar as home.

Bishop Waugh rose at the close of Mr. Johnson's address and remarked, that he wished to be allowed the privilege of asking one silent response to the beloved and affectionate brethren who had just taken their leave. He was sure that the response he asked would be cheerfully given, and would accord most fully with the feelings of all present. And he was also sure that they would respond when he said of these brethren, that their presence and their labors and their christian example have all been of the most gratifying and edifying character. The Bishop remarked that he had never seen Methodism presented in lovelier or kindlier aspects than as exhibited in these men of God, and he thought them worthy of imitation by all. Their style and manner of preaching were worth of all praise, the copious and appropriate citations of the word of God in their ministration, gave them a force and an unction that we all do well to take heed to. The silent response to which he alluded was, that each member of the Conference rise to his feet and lift up his heart to God for a blessing upon these brethren, that he who looks upon the heart, grant that our prayers may accompany these beloved brethren to their homes, and impart to them the consolations they have communicated to us.

When the Bishop closed his remarks every member rose from his seat, and a deep religious feeling pervaded the entire assembly.

Dr. Hannah was overcome with emotion as he bowed his venerable head, over which had been scattered the frosts of many winters, and with a voice tremulous with emotion, said Brethren, farewell, I shall never forget your kindness, nor

the scenes of this hour. Taking their leave of the Bishops the British Representatives passed through the crowded rotunda ; and amid tears, and choking sighs, and farewell greetings, they retired to their lodgings at the house of the Governor.

Mr. Wilson, from the Committee on Itinerancy, presented the following :

The Committee on Itinerancy begs leave to report that they have had under consideration various memorials, proposing certain modifications of the rule of Discipline relating to Presiding Elders.

They have examined and considered these memorials. Twenty-nine of them were printed, and six were written, representing about four hundred private and official members of the Church. They ask, first, that the Presiding Elder be appointed to a station within the bounds of his District, from which station he shall receive his salary ; his traveling expenses to be borne by the circuit or station, over which Quarterly Conference he may be called upon to preside.

If this be not granted then, second, that each Annual Conference be left to regulate its own economy in regard to this office.

If this be not granted, then, third, that New York, Brooklyn, and other large cities be excepted from the rule as it now stands.

If this be not granted, then, fourth, that such modifications be made as shall best meet the ends proposed by the petitioners.

There were also referred to us five remonstrances against all such changes : two from Annual Conferences\* viz. Maine and New-York, and three from Quarterly Conference.

Also, resolutions from the Wisconsin Annual Conference first, praying that the office of Presiding Elder elective

Second, that the Bishop be requested not to appoint any brother to this office who may have served four consecutive years until an interval of two years shall have elapsed.

After due deliberation we unanimously propose for adoption the following preamble and resolution, viz :

*Whereas*, it seems impracticable to modify the Presiding Eldership, as at present constituted, without impairing its usefulness, and endangering the permanency of our itinerancy. Therefore,

\*This was an error, afterwards corrected. No conferences remonstrated.

*Resolved*, That we recommend no change at present in that feature of our economy, relying upon the wisdom of the Episcopacy in selecting such incumbents for the office as shall give it the greatest possible efficiency.

Mr. Hall, of the Troy Conference, remarked that he did not feel much disposed to speak, and yet thought perhaps something ought to be said. If he did nothing more, he would introduce the speaking and he had no doubt but there would be many ready when he sat down. He thought there should be some modification of the Presiding Elders' office. He would not conceal the fact that there were many embarrassments connected with the system, as it is in some sections of the work, and that there were complaints arising from various quarters. There were seven men who were employed as Presiding Elders though they could be much better employed. He was a Presiding Elder, and after he had preached three times and administered the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper he could not persuade himself that his labors were sufficient to pay for his keeping, and he was decidedly of the opinion that the office as it exists, at present, would not, in common parlance, pay. Mr. H. made some amusing but pertinent remarks. Among other things he said, referring to the flying visits which Presiding Elders are obliged to make from having thirty or more appointments, that he felt sometimes that he was a fugitive, if not a vagabond. He closed by offering the following substitute :

Whenever an Annual Conference shall request the Bishop to give the Presiding Elder of one or more of the Districts regular pastoral work, it shall be his duty to comply with such request, and Presiding Elders so appointed shall retain all the power and discharge all the duties of other Presiding Elders ; except they shall not be required to travel through their Districts, except to hold the first and fourth Quarterly Conferences in each year, and to attend to all exigencies that may arise in their District.

The District Stewards shall estimate the necessary traveling expenses of such Presiding Elders, and also the compensation that shall be allowed him for his services as Presiding Elder, and shall assess the same upon the several charges according to their respective ability.

P. Cartwright hardly knew what to say. He doubted if he fully understood the subject, and that he might have it

fairly before him, asked for the reading of the resolution. He remarked that it was a delicate subject, and as he was a delicate and modest man, it was doubtful if he could do it that justice its importance demanded. He would say, that he was sorry that the Troy Conference had been so far overreached and misled in the appointment of his brother as Presiding Elder, for certainly, a brother who did not earn his quarterage ought not to be in the office.

My brother Hall over the way informs us, that he don't earn his pay as a Presiding Elder! (Laughter.) Now, if that's the sort of fellows they have in the office, I don't wonder sir, that they want a change. (Renewed Laughter.) But they don't need the office removed, it's the men, sir. Put them out and put better ones in. (Uproarious merriment, in the midst of which B. M. Hall, rises to explain.) B. M. Hall, "I wish to explain" said he, looking with a mock wistfulness at Cartwright.

Cartwright tried to look grave in the midst of his fun, but it was no go, and the old man's face was all of a stretch with excitement, only relieved by a hearty laugh—"Well, well, go ahead with your explaining."

B. M. Hall, "I did not say that I did not earn my pay. I work hard for it. But my Presiding Eldership don't pay the church enough to warrant the appointment.

P. Cartwright—That indeed. Then if you do your best, you are not to blame. And I must turn with all deference to the Episcopacy, (laughter) and say, on you gentlemen rests this charge. You have put a man, sirs, into the office of Presiding Elder, who can't fill it to profit. (A roar of merriment, in the midst of which, a new man enters the strife.)

Dr. Durbin—"I rise, sir, to a point of order.

Cartwright—"State your 'pint.'" Doctor Durbin.—It is this, sir. Has any man a right to impeach the administration of the Bishops in open Conference, when these doings are now undergoing an examination before the proper committee?

Bishop Morris, thought any member was at liberty to complain of the Bishops if he deemed their action censurable

To this permission, Cartwright responded with a broad grin, and a gesture meant for a bow, in which he literally

spread himself, and did the genteel as well as could be expected.

But Durbin repeated the question

Cartwright—"Are you not mistaken, Doctor?"

Durbin—"I think not, Bro. Cartwright."

Cartwright—"Am I the man you are after?"

Durbin—"You are the man I'm after."

Cartwright—"Aint that the man you are after?" pointing at Hall amid shouts of laughter.

Durbin—"No, brother Cartwright!"

Cartwright—"Why, sir, it was him, and not me that brought a charge against the Bishop. He sir, declared that our excellent Bishops have put a man into the office who could'n't earn his pay. That's a slander on the Bishop, sir. And it was him, and not me, that said it first."

Durbin—"I still rise sir, to a point of order. Is it in order for a brother to represent in open conference, what he considers a slander on the Bishops?"

For once Cartwright seemed to be headed in the game of fun-making.

Hall again rose to explain. So far from having done what Bro. Cartwright attributed to him, he wished now distinctly to say, that he did not believe the Bishop could have done better than he did, even if he had appointed Bro. Cartwright himself!

The flood of merriment broke out afresh, and fairly overwhelmed the hitherto dominant and laurelled champion of fun!

The whole thing was rather undignified, yet the enjoyment of it was so unusual from the Bishops to the ladies in the lobby, as to demonstrate clearly, that

A little nonsense now and then,  
Is relished by the best of men!

In his Conference they had commenced lessening the number of appointments on a District, and increasing the number of Presiding Elders. This worked well, and he thought it productive of good to the church, as it would supply the work in every District, and also strengthen the Episcopal council. One fact stood out prominently, viz: that the smaller districts were getting along much better than the larger ones. As for himself, in the matter of support, he would rather risk it with ten than twenty-five appointments.

Mr. Mattison said this was one of the three great questions to which special prominence was given at the commencement of our session. Reports on slavery, the extension of the term of ministerial service, and the Presiding Eldership, were especially designated, to take precedence of all other business till disposed of, and for one he believed this an important subject, and one that ought to be gravely considered. And yet it was a very delicate subject. Here were some ninety men on the floor of this Conference—good men and true—who were now presiding Elders; here no doubt, on account of their zeal, ability, and worth, and in spite of the offices they hold, and anything said against the *office* would be liable to be understood as a reflection upon the *officers*. He had no hostility to Presiding Elders. While the office continued he would stand by them, and if he believed a modification of the office would cog the wheels of our itinerancy, he would resist such modification as strongly as any other man.

The question was not whether Presiding Elders were necessary or not, but whether or not the office might be modified to advantage, whether it was essential to the integrity and usefulness of the office that all Presiding Elders should travel their districts. In his view two things, and two only, were essential to the office: namely, supervision of the district, and representation in the cabinet. The oversight of an experienced and wise administration of discipline, is necessary on every district. Some man should have charge of the preachers as now, and see that the sacraments are administered, where the preachers were not ordained. So, also, it is necessary that some one acquainted with the preachers and charges, should represent both in the cabinet, and assist the Bishops in making the appointments. All these ends, it seemed to him, could be secured quite as well in a densely populated district, with the Presiding Elder stationed, as if he was required to travel. We now have twenty or thirty charges in a district in some cases, and the Presiding Elder visits each once or twice a year. Could not a Presiding Elder stationed in the midst of eight or ten charges oversee their interests, and represent them as well in the cabinet as a Presiding Elder can thirty charges under the present system?

He believed it would bring the Presiding Eldership more

fully into sympathy with the regular ministry to put them also into regular pastoral work. Instead of their moving once in four, or eight, or twelve years, as the rest of us do, and do the work of a stationed preacher, and they would soon understand that it was not to "lie in bed and eat sugar," as a brother represented it to be the other day.

But it was said that it would be premature to modify the system, because so few had petitioned for a change. He was sorry the Report of the Committee ignored the fact that the four hundred memorialists were almost to a man official members—Trustees, Stewards, Leaders, Local Preachers, and Exhorters of our Church; and one of those memorials was headed by Rev. Dr. Crow, an eminent minister and a Presiding Elder. These men asked only for what has already been done in Liberia Annual Conference. The Presiding Elders were all stationed there, and he believed the same thing had been done in one or two instances in this country.

The Presiding Elders were not aware of the feeling among the people as to that office. They were the last to hear anything on that subject. He had stood by them, and plead for them, and urged the stewards to pay them, and would do so still if the office *must* be continued in its present form; but he begged brethren not to rush the subject through or give it the go by, as if it was one of no moment. Let it at least be well considered—let us have at least one day to think of it and pray over it.

Mr. Finley thought he felt a shot come over in his direction, and as hit birds always flutter, he felt it his duty to say something. He had been one of those unfortunate men that belonged to the *corps* of Presiding Elders. He had been twenty years a Presiding Elder, and he expressed it as his deliberate conviction, that if a Presiding Elder would go to his appointment on Friday night and stay until Tuesday, laboring hard all the time, they would be felt. His experience attested the fact, that they were most useful and profitable men. He recollected when Quarterly Meetings were high days in the Church, and persons would travel thirty miles to attend them. Presiding Elders then came to meeting in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and they preached in demonstration of the spirit and with power. They were looked upon with wonder, and their labors were generally crowned with revivals. He believed no

labor was more effectual than that connected with the office if done right and in a true spiritual manner, but these men must not be loaded down like Bro. Hall ; ten or twelve appointments are enough for any man. When a Presiding Elder carries spring-water with him in his heart the people will always hail him as sent of God, and the work of God revives wherever he goes. He said the office could not be dispensed with ; it was part and parcle of the itinerant system. If, as some propose, they are stationed, who will do the pastor's work for them ? As it is, some of your young men complain that they have not time to attend to the pastoral work. If he had the power, there would not be a station in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mr. Slicer remarked that he would reply to Bro. Mattison. Some of the brethren behind him said we are all ready for the question, and nothing can change our minds. Well, said Mr. S., that may be in regard to themselves, but they cannot speak for all, he was certain. Admitting all that Bro. Mattison says be true, that there are four hundred petitioners asking for a modification of the Presiding Elder's office, yet he does not tell us that they are not agreed among themselves, what that modification shall be. Some ask one thing, and some another, and quite different things. Some want the office made elective, others want them stationed like other preachers, and made simply chairmen of districts, others still want them to have numerous appointments, &c., &c. According to this mode of procedure there was not a single feature, however essential, but could, through the active exertions of a dozen preachers and others, have memorials gotten up, circulated, and numerous signed. In the petitions asking for a modification of the system, there was about one to every thousand of our membership. He asked if they were about to open up the old Presiding Elder question. This question rent the church in 1827-28. The decisive action of the Baltimore Conference saved that question. Then local preachers and other official members with the laity arose up, and as they came to the precipice the traveling preachers stepped back, but the local preachers and others went over. He had never felt burdened with the Presiding Elder's office, though he had sustained that relation. Whenever, said Mr. S., there is a general expression in regard to this question he would be in favor of a

change. But four hundred are all that ask for the change, and is no attention to be paid to the remainder? Much has been said about England, but all know the difference in the system of operations in that country.

In allusion to the remarks of B. M. Hall, declaring his incompetency for the work, Mr. Slicer said "I hope sir he'll resign from that office or ask to have his relation changed !

As he sat down Dr. Kenneday exclaimed "That is too bad."

Mr. Lowery wanted but a few moments on this question. He rose, he said, to make a motion to postpone the consideration of the subject until to-morrow. He was not sure but that a modification of the system would be promotive of good. Something, he thought, must be done. It has been objected that our people have not asked for a change. Our people had not been expected to engage in this matter. If they had been appealed to on this subject, instead of four hundred, there would have been thousands asking for the change. They seemed disposed to bear the ills rather than complain ; but unless something is done they will become at last impatient, and assume an insurrectionary attitude and demand it. This, said Mr. L., will come. Here is a respectable petition from official members and others—from that class of men who do the most to support the ministry and the institutions of the Church. They who best understand the workings of the system and the wants of the Church, ask a modification of that system. He was sorry the Committee had not proposed some change, and he therefore moved that the subject be postponed until to-morrow. The question on postponement was put and lost.

Dr. Drummond remarked, he would never, after having made a speech, moved at its close a postponement for the purpose of shutting off debate.

But, said the Dr., have not the memorialists been heard ? Has not the subject been under their deliberate investigation. He was for treating them with all deference and respect, and if their petitions are not adopted or their prayers granted, still they are treated respectfully. He thought these intimations and allusions were uncalled for.

Mr. Watts remarked that some thoughts had passed through his mind during the discussion. Whenever, said

Mr. W., any change is proposed a cry is raised immediately, the church is in danger. A proposition is made to extend the time of ministerial service, and the cry is raised, it will destroy Methodism and the Itinerancy. A modification is asked of the Presiding Elder's office,—it will destroy Methodism. One would infer from all this, that Methodism, instead of being the strongest, is the weakest church organization in the world. We can't leave a preacher three years on a circuit or station, without endangering Methodism. He respected his aged brethren and loved to hear them talk about old fashioned Methodism. He was a Methodist himself body, bones, and nerves, and he thought none had a greater regard for the church, but the idea that a few changes suited to the times would destroy the church he thought preposterous. It has been the boast of Methodism that it has elasticity and will yield to outward pressure. One speaker likened it to an iron bedstead on which all were to be placed. If any were too long they had to be cut off or cramped up to suit the dimensions. He thought if this Procrustean doctrine was to prevail, they had better have a bedstead large enough for the tallest. Then the smallest could lie easy on it. He did not believe Methodism was the weak thing some would make out of it. The people had not been asked in regard to this matter; with us the people are ignored as a general thing. If they were allowed to speak they would send up their petitions, and your table would groan with the weight. Mr. W. made some further remarks in regard to the impossibility of Presiding Elders, who had so many appointments, understanding fully the wants of the circuits. He goes to an appointment, puts up with a good brother. Takes a little tea and toast—on Saturday evening—leaves the next day after preaching; and yet he is supposed to know the condition of the work and the position and acceptability of the preacher. All he knows he learns in that one family. Let the representation of the Q. Conference, be made in writing, and signed by the names of the members, be the only representation relied on. And this could be given at a single visit toward the close of the year.

Dr. Hodgson followed in reply. He denied that Methodism was weak, or that its weakness was to be inferred from the fact that some of the brethren raised a cry against innovations. A government might be ever so wise and strong,

and yet changes and modifications though they would not destroy, might cripple or retard its operations. He said it was not true, that the people in the Methodist Church were ignored. It is not true, sir. He repelled the charge indignantly. Methodism was the religion of the American democracy, and the rights of the people were respected and ever would be respected. Such a charge as this might as well be brought against the civil government, because out of twenty-five million people only three million were voters. He would ask if any one was prepared to vote for the proposed changes. He did not feel sure but what changes were necessary, but he would not express an opinion until more thoroughly satisfied on that subject. But the people are not here asking it. He had been informed by the Rev. Mr. Scott, that it was his opinion, that it would be better for Ireland to have a Presiding Eldership. He was not prepared to give up the office, though he was never a Presiding Elder or a candidate for that office. In conclusion, he remarked, that he was in favor of the report.

Mr. Porter, of New England, said he would endorse what his excellent brother had said about the people. He believed that Church could be found where they were more harmonious and united. He said if the people did not come here with petitions on this subject, it was because they were satisfied. He was a presiding Elder, and he was sorry for it. He thought he honored the office, and the officers that attended to their duty; for himself he would prefer belonging to the other class of ministers. He believed to-day, though coming from the East, that it would be better to leave it to the Conference what policy to adopt on this subject. It was his solemn conviction that it was for the good of the greatest part of the Church to go on with the present policy. It was the case, doubtless, with the West and Northwest, and New-England. We have before us petitions, respectable petitions, from certain portions of our work, which tell us the system does not work well. The simple question is, shall we hold fast to the old plan, or accommodate in some respects to suit the exigencies of the case? Our excellent Bishops see the necessity of an accommodation, and in the East and elsewhere make slight changes. In the East, within a space of ten miles, there are thirty or forty circuits and stations. They do right and show their wisdom

in placing these in one district, by joining charges together, but it does not follow that in the West where the appointments are so far apart, they should do the same. *He* had no fellowship for this chairmanship question. It was not adapted to the policy of *Methodism*, but he thought he could conceive of a plan that would meet the circumstances of the case. Instead of giving the Presiding Elder a station, give him one half of the Conference. This would make a man of him. Hold him responsible for the supervision of that entire field, and let him visit and know every preacher in the bounds of his charge—understand their wants and capabilities, and then let him represent them in the cabinet. If the Conference don't like this arrangement, then let them pursue the old plan. *He* repudiated the idea that, because we had great districts, and some of our people went thirty miles to a Quarterly Meeting, we must do the same now. In other days we had in the East districts that now include whole Conferences; some of our people then had to go forty miles to Quarterly Meeting, and if the same state of things existed they would do it again. Now, a Quarterly Meeting can be reached in ten minutes. The Lord has blessed us and we have increased in numbers and stations, and old things have passed away. *He* hoped the report would be recommitted. We should not stick for little matters, but go on as Providence leads the way. *He* did not feel frightened when changes were proposed. Once, said Mr. P., our fathers did nobly in their struggles for God and the Church, but it seems they should allow us to make changes where they are obviously necessary. *He* had been out West and had seen the log cabin give place to the neat frame or the substantial brick. Shall we still continue in log cabins? No. Let *Methodism* march on in healthy progress. *He* was satisfied with the Presiding Eldership except being in the office himself. If it is modified it will no doubt gratify our people.

## SEVENTEENTH DAY.

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*May 20—Morning Session.*—Conference met at the usual hour. Bishop James in the chair. The religious exercises were conducted by Mr. Brown of Cincinnati.

The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Bristol asked leave of absence for Dr. Bowen, which was granted.

Dr. Hodgson moved that in case the reserve should come and present his credentials he would be entitled to his seat. Withdrawn, it being conceded he was entitled to his seat without action.

Dr. Floy called the attention of the chair to a resolution passed in relation to the order of business, and moved to suspend the order of the day, to finish the business of yesterday. Carried.

Mr. Livesey being entitled to the floor having occupied it at the hour of adjournment, rose and said that he wished to have the East understood on the subject of Presiding Elders. He was fully satisfied that the matter was not clearly apprehended. He assured the friends of the Church that in that portion of the work to which he belonged the Presiding Elder's office was as necessary as elsewhere, and the only object he and his brethren had in view, was to render that office more efficient, and he believed, in the region he represented, there would not be a single voice raised to destroy that office.

Mr. Nichols moved that the Committee have liberty to correct a verbal error which occurs in their report.

Mr. Disbro moved to amend by re-committing the report.

Mr. Porter hoped that the report would be re-committed, as the Committee would doubtless avail themselves of the suggestions thrown out and modify it so as to suit the views of the Conference.

Mr. Bangs said it was obvious, whatever might be said, that they could not dispense with the office of Presiding Elder. They were needed east, west, north and south. He was not a Presiding Elder, Had been once under the yoke and enjoyed it well. He was in favor of re-committal. He wanted from the Committee an expression of opinion in regard to the stationing power. He was aware that the Bishop exercised the power now to appoint a Presiding Elder to the pastoral office. If some plan could be devised by which the Bishops could be authorized, when he and his advisers think the work demands it, to appoint a Presiding Elder to a charge, it would be very desirable.

Mr. Wilmer remarked that this report was not brought in hastily or unadvisedly. It was examined most thorough-

ly in all its bearings, and there had been a great deal more discussion in the committee than been had on this floor. He would assure the brethren that the most mature deliberation had been given to its consideration.

Mr. Smith, of Indiana, wished to reply to a remark made by Professor Mattison on yesterday. He said there were ninety Presiding Elders in the Conference, and to-day he tells us that all on the committee who presented this report, are Presiding Elders, except two. He wished to know what object he had in view in making this statement? Are Presiding Elders not to be trusted? Are they disqualified from giving the subject an investigation? Could they only see through certain glasses, and examine the subject only from one stand point? Were they so prejudiced that they could only look at the subject through Presiding Elder's glasses? He thought the remarks on yesterday and to-day were not designed to influence the Conference, but they looked abroad, and were doubtless designated to create an influence elsewhere. Mr. S. supposed there were ninety Presiding Elders in the General Conference, but he had no doubt there was a hundred more that wanted the office. He thought there were some points vital to the question which had not yet been touched, which he waived for the present. He thought nothing could be gained by re-commitment, except to correct a verbal error.

Mr. Mattison remarked by way of explanation that his views were misrepresented and his motives misconstrued. He had said the subject was a delicate question, that there were ninety Presiding Elders, but they were good men and true, and he introduced this fact in relation to the number, to show that if there was no modification of the system, it would be attributed to the Presiding Elders, and he did not wish any such motives to be attributed to them, as that their influence prevented it. He corrected a mistake he had made. There were 31 presiding elders, to seven who were not, composing the committee that reported against any change in the P. Eldership.

Mr. Dustin remarked, I have no doubt that there is an honest difference of opinion on this subject among the members of this Conference. And it is not proper that we should even hint that those who differ from us are governed by other than the purest motives. And yet it is a fact wor-

thy of especial remark, if it is a fact, and I have no reason to doubt—that ninety of the members of this General Conference are Presiding Elders. And this fact is not to be overlooked in this discussion. It is natural to suppose that these Presiding Elders, or a majority of them are in favor of the existing state of things, and they have a right to be, and they are no doubt honest and conscientious in their convictions. But it is not strange that some brethren should think their position and peculiar relation to the Church *might possibly* have some influence in moulding their opinions and guiding their actions in relation to this subject. It is obvious that a Presiding Elder would not be as likely to know the feelings and opinions of our lay-brethren on this subject as the Pastor. A lay brother who had objections to the existing state of things, would hesitate to express them to his Presiding Elder, for fear it might be construed into an objection against the man, and not the office. But he will talk freely and familiarly with his Pastor, in the hope that the Pastor may exert some influence, somewhere, to have such modifications made as will remove the objections, and adapt the working of our system to the present state and condition of the Church. A Presiding Elder, therefore, may think that the laity are satisfied with the present state of things, when in fact the reverse may be true. If we would act intelligently on this subject, we should look upon both sides, and receive testimony from different parties. I am in favor of re-committing the report, in the hope that the committee may suggest some modification that may meet the wants and wishes of brethren in that portion of our work where modifications are desired. It is doubtful whether any changes in the Discipline on this subject are necessary, but it seems to me that some modifications *in usage*, are necessary to adapt our system to the present condition of the Church in many portions.

Mr. Bangs moved to amend so that the committee may be instructed to alter their report in such a way as to give the Superintendents the power to appoint Presiding Elders to pastoral offices when in their judgments they shall deem it proper.

Dr. Hodgson remarked that he had no objection to a re-committal. He presumed the minority would bring in a re-

port. He had no objection to having it referred to a special committee.

Dr. Kenneday said he rose to indicate his willingness to make a speech, or to take the vote. If brethren were ready he would not speak. Here a number of voices were heard, Mr. President, Mr. President, from those who wished to speak, and the Dr. resumed. There was, said he, but one argument to induce the Conference to recommit, viz : that two annual Conferences had remonstrated against a change. Such was not the fact, however. He hoped the amendment would not prevail, but that it be recommitted for the purpose of enabling the committee to correct their error, inasmuch as no such Conference had remonstrated.

Mr. Pearne, of Oregon, moved that the main question be put. Carried.

The question was then taken on the amendment—it was lost.

The question was then taken on the substitute and that was lost.

The motion that the Committee be allowed to correct the error was carried. The report was then adopted.

**AYES.**—Allyn, of Southern Illinois, Baird, Bangs, Barker, Barns, Battelle, Beach, Berry, Bewley, Blain, Blake, Blakeslec, Bowers, Boyd, of N. W. Indiana, Boyd, of Pittsburgh, Brooks, of Cincinnati, Brooks, of Iowa, Brouse, Brown, of Cincinnati, Brown, of Baltimore, Brown, of New Jersey, Brown, of Troy, Buck, of Illinois. Burlingham, Burns, Cartwright, Chivington, Clark, of New York, Coats, Collins, of Baltimore, Connell, Conrey, Cooper, of Philadelphia, Corrington, Cox, Crary Crawford, Crooks, Cunningham, Dana, Dimit, Drummond, Durbin, Felch, Finley, Flower, Floy, French, Goheen, Gorrie, Graham, Gregg, Griffin, of New York, Griffin, of Troy, Griffith, Gurley, Hamilton, Haney, Harris, Hawkins, Heath, Henderson, Hill, of Indiana, Hill, of Erie, Hirst, Hodgson, Holliday, Hopkins, Howard, Jamison, King, of New York, Kingsley, of Erie, Kingsley, of Genesee, Kinsley, Kissing, Kuhl, Lanahan, Lauck, Lemon, Lenhart, Lewis, Luccock, McCombs, Martin, of W. Virginia, Martin, of Baltimore, Monroe, Morey, Morgan, Mulfinger, Nast, Nichols, Osbon, Parks, of Oneida, Pearne, of Wyoming, Peck, Perry, Phillips, Pilcher, of Mich., Pilcher, of N. Ohio, Poe, Poisal, Porter, of N. Jersey, Power, Pratt, Quigley, Reddy, Reed, of Iowa, Reese, Roberts, Robertson, Ruter, Rutledge, Sanderson, Sapp, Sargent, Slicer, Smith, of Indiana, Stare, Stanton, Swain, Thompson, of Philadelphia, Trimble, Triplet, Tlotter, VanCleve, VanDusen, Waite, Wakefield, Walker, Wallace, Washburn, Watson, Wheeler, Wilmer, Wilson, of Baltimore, Wilson, of Erie, Wood, Worthington, Yocum, Young, of Ohio, Hull, Stallard—143.

NOES.—Allen, of Maine, Baker, Bannister, Bennet, Bingham, Bradford, Bristol, Brockway, Buck, of East Genesee, Button, Carlton, Carpenter, Chamberlayne, Clark, of Wyoming, Coggeshall, Collins, of Michigan, Cook, Coombe, Crews, Crowl, Culver, Dempster, Dennis, Disbro, Dodge, Dustin, Erwin, Evans, Farrington, Fowble, Gillette, Griswold, Hall, Hibbard, Hitchcock, Hosmer, Hoyt, Hulburd, Kennaday, Kenney, Kidder, King, of Vermont, Knox, Leihy, Livesey, Lowry, Marcy, Mattison, Merwin, Moffit, Parks, of Troy, Phelps, Pillsbury, Porter, of New England, Randall, Raymond, Reid, of New York East, Requa, Rice, of New England, Rust, Starks, Simonds, Smith, of New Hampshire, Summers, Thayer, Thompson, of N. W. Indiana, Thompson, of North Ohio, Thurston, Watts, Webster, Wise, Witherspoon. Young, of Cincinnati —73.

The balance of the report was then read and adopted.

Rev. A. Stevens having arrived, Mr. Collins moved that he be entitled to his seat. Carried.

P. Cartwright moved that the order of the day be suspended for the purpose of presenting a communication from the Rev. Mr. Jacoby, of Bremen.

Mr. Hamilton moved to take up the report of the Missionary Committee.

That part of the report relating to the organization of a Mission Conference in Germany was taken up.

On motion it was adopted.

Next in order was the item in relation to the establishment of a Book Concern.

Mr. Phillips remarked that so far as the establishment of a Book Concern in Germany was concerned, he had stated to Bro. Jacoby what the Book Concern was able to do on this subject, but what the General Conference might do he could not say. The committee had given him no intimation that they were going to make the request contained in their report. It was his opinion that the Book Concern of the United States could supply all the books needed for the church, both at home and abroad. He was willing to make an arrangement to keep up a supply of books in Germany.

Mr. Carlton remarked that he thought the Conference was not prepared to act upon this subject now. His opinion was that it should be referred to the committee on the Book Concern. The report was accordingly on motion, referred.

Dr. Floy asked if the Report of the Committee on Missions was to be understood as the result of their deliberations! He wanted the questions answered.

Mr. Hoyt, Secretary of the Committee, said that the subject was under consideration by the Committee on Missions. Their views were not satisfactory to Brother Jacoby, and he presented a communication, the whole being referred to the Conference.

Dr. Nast, said Brother Jacoby was satisfied to have the Report referred to the Committee on the Book Concern, with an amendment that the Committee be instructed to consider the report thereon, as soon as practicable. The amendment prevailed.

That part of the report relating to the appointment of a Bishop to Africa was then taken up.

Mr. Ruter moved that the report be adopted.

Mr. Lowry rose to make an inquiry. It was whether the report, if adopted, shuts us up to the selection of a man from Africa, as Bishop?

Dr. Durbin replied that it did not.

Mr. Walker moved that the report be taken up item by item. Carried.

The first item was then taken up.

Dr. Young remarked that he entered his protest against the item under consideration. From his very heart he was opposed to the use of the term Bishop in the place. He objected on the ground that these Bishops were to be ordained, and would become sub-Bishops. Why ordain them Bishops? It was the general opinion that there were but two orders in the Church, but the report proposed to make a kind of a fourth order. He saw no propriety of ordaining the man who should be elected as a Bishop. When a man is taken and ordained a Bishop, no greater qualifications are conferred upon him. We only want a Bishop there for the purpose of ordaining, and in that case our Bishops can go to Africa. He thought the measure irregular, and out of order. He took the same ground at Boston that he stood on to-day. For fifty-four years he had had an opportunity of studying the Methodist Discipline. He liked the Episcopacy, it was a most valuable office and well guarded. He would not have its influence weakened or scattered. If he could have his way he would say let a Presiding Elder go there and ordain the Preachers.

Dr. Peck remarked that he was in favor of the report of the Committee. It may, said the Dr., be recollected by

some, that at the General Conference of 1852, he was opposed to the election of a Bishop for Africa. The measure then contemplated met with his opposition, but he had changed his mind since that time. One of our Bishops had visited Africa, and presided over the Liberia Conference. Since his return his health has been impaired. He believed that our missions in Africa, Germany, and elsewhere should have Episcopal functions. He hoped the report would obtain a constitutional vote, so that whenever these missions may require Episcopal supervision they will be permitted to have Bishops.

Mr. King, of Vermont, remarked that he had taken pleasure in sitting at the feet of father Young while he was speaking. He had heard him in Boston, and witnessed the failure of the measure proposed. These venerable men had fought a good fight, and explored the land, and opened the way, but they should give the young men scope. Let them feel that

"No pent-up Utica contracts their powers,  
But the whole boundless continent is ours."

They had taken the wilderness, let them take off the trammels and the young men would take the world. Why, say, don't send a Bishop to Africa? Our missionary enterprise is confined to the coast, let us penetrate the very heart of Africa. Nothing would be taken from the Episcopacy by this measure. Let us send out our machinery till we take the whole world.

Mr. Finley rose to a question of privilege. He thought the old men were misrepresented. They do not stand in the way of young men. Let them go out in the name of God and take the word. If he was a young man he would compete with the stoutest of them in the work.

Mr. Dustin moved that the item be amended by striking out the word "Bishop" and inserting "General Superintendent."

Mr. Walker suggested that it would be well to hear from the Superintendents in regard to the subject of appointing a Bishop for Africa, especially from Bishop Scott, who had visited Africa.

Mr. Collins suggested an amendment to an amendment viz ; to strike out the word General.

## *Proceedings of the*

Bishop Scott remarked that this was not the better time perhaps to give the information suggested.

Mr. Simonds moved as a substitute, the following :

But may appoint a Missionary Superintendent who shall exercise the office of Bishop in his particular mission field for eight years, or for such a time as the General Conference may direct.

We may want, said Mr. S., a Missionary Bishop for other localities—on the Pacific coast for instance, or in Central America. Manifest destiny seems to look in that direction. We want such an office as that of Missionary Superintendent and have them ordained for that work.

Dr. Durbin remarked that he felt some hesitancy in saying, that when a question of this nature has been carefully deliberated and then re-committed with all the suggestions from all parts of the country, that he would ask if it was safe or wise for an individual to introduce an amendment that would defeat the whole ?

If Bro. S. thinks that the Pacific coast or China or elsewhere will need a Bishop, the amendment will put that within your reach. The report provides a Bishop for any foreign mission. There was a little friction in regard to some minor points. Bro. Dustin proposes to displace the word Bishop and substitute that of Superintendent. In the Discipline these terms are synonyms. But he had no objection to this amendment if he would leave out the word General.

Mr. Slicer asked Dr. Durbin if the report provides, at any future time, for California.

The Dr. replied that it only provided for the Foreign Missions. California is not a Foreign Mission.

Mr. Simonds explained.

Mr. Thompson, of Philadelphia, remarked that he thought the question of electing a Bishop for a limited time of service had not been introduced before, and hence he thought the amendment out of place, if not out of order.

Dr. Trotter said the amendment of Bro. Simonds directed attention to difficulties to be relieved. He was opposed to making any change in the grand features of Episcopacy, and was altogether in favor of a general superintendency. All that was necessary could be accomplished by increasing the force of the Episcopacy. If it were so strengthened as to add a single man to the college of Bishops, let him go to

Africa and remain there. Should he find it necessary at any time to return, let him return and take a his place among his colleagues. He was in favor of the substitute; it commended itself to their consideration, and he preferred it to the report itself. What, said the Dr., is the object of a Superintendent of a Missionary field? It was that the work might be matured so that Methodism in foreign lands shall be the same as here. A period must come when these Foreign Missions will become off-shoots, and we must prepare for it.

Mr. Hamilton moved that the substitute be laid on the table. Carried.

Mr. Hamilton said the colored people like minor heirs, were under tutors and governors, but he was looking forward to a time when this pupilage will cease. He thought it near at hand. This was not a final result. He hoped to live to see the day when they will have all the rights and privileges of the Church in Africa.

Dr. Raymond remarked that he was not disposed to protract debate. We had the whole matter discussed and it was somewhat surprising to him that the delegates remembered so well the speeches they delivered in Boston. He closed his remarks by moving that the question be taken without debate.

Dr. Floy wished to know to whom the Bishop, if elected, would be amenable, whether to this General Conference, or to the Mission Conference.

The motion of Dr. Raymond was then put and lost.

Dr. Clark asked if this Bishop should at any time find it necessary to leave his work where will he fail? What will be his ecclesiastical relations? Will he be a Bishop for life?

Mr. Harris suggested that these questions come up in the next resolution.

Dr. Clark replied if the first resolution be adopted, it will be necessary to consider the second in view of the questions suggested.

Mr. Leiby called for the reading of the resolution.

Dr. Floy repeated his remarks. If the Liberia Annual Conference elected a Bishop and he be ordained here, to whom is he amenable? If it be answered to the Liberian Conference, a strange anomaly will present itself, too absurd and ridiculous to be entertained. If we take the other

ground that he is amenable to the General Conference, then he must come here every four years, for the passage of his character and official acts. Every four years, the African Bishop will be among us, and his acts and doings will be passed upon by the committees on Episcopacy and Itinerancy, as these committees will have to approve or censure his conduct as the case may be. If this be the case, then nothing will be gained by the election of such a Bishop so far as expenses and trouble are concerned in crossing the Atlantic. Better pursue the old plan than involve ourselves in such a dilemma. He was opposed to the resolution unless the committee could throw some additional light on the subject.

Mr. Griffin arose to ask if the General Conference had power to transfer its authority to the Liberia Conference to elect a Bishop.

Dr. Dnrbin replied to the questions proposed by Dr. Floy, by saying that the Episcopal jurisdiction was intended by the report to be limited exclusively to Africa. The Bishop would be a part and parcel of the Liberia Conference. If arraigned and expelled, he could come here for an appeal, as any member of that Conference can do.

Mr. Brockway moved to lay the report on the table. Carried.

Mr. Pearne moved to extend the time for the receiving of memorials, &c.

The following were received:

By Mr. Griffin, from New York Conference, a remonstrance on Slavery.

By Mr. Merwin, a similar remonstrance.

By Mr. Randall, a memorial on Slavery.

Mr. Phelps moved that so much of the journal of Black River Conference as contains resolutions praying the General Conference not to make such appropriations of missionary funds as in anywise to promote Slavery, be referred to the Committee on Missions.

Mr. Bristol presented a memorial on Presiding Elders question.

Mr. Buck also.

Mr. Starr presented memorials on Slavery—Mr. Kingsley also.

Mr. Cook presented memorials on Slavery and change in Discipline; also on boundaries.

Mr. Haney presented memorial from Mr. Hedstrom in regard to the publication of a paper in the Swedish tongue.

Mr. Pilcher presented memorials on revision and periodicals; also on Bethel cause.

Dr. Thomson presented memorial from Dr. Shaffer on claims of superannuated preachers.

Mr. Vancleve a memorial on Book Concern.

Mr. Hopkins presented memorial in relation to a paper in Missouri.

Dr. Durbin presented memorial on Lay Delegation.

Mr. Thayer presented memorial on slavery, from the Hedding Church, Boston.

Mr. Coggeshall presented memorial on slavery.

Mr. Harris presented an invitation from the Young Men's Christian Association to visit their rooms,

Which was, on motion, gratefully accepted.

Mr. Brockway presented a resolution which instructed the committee on appointments not to station more than twenty-five preachers remote from the city on Sabbath.

J. S. Porter presented a resolution relating to irregularities in Hoboken, by having religious organization within one Conference, by members whose relation exists elsewhere:

C. Kingsley, providing for recording the minutes of the trials of private members.

Mr. Gregg, proposing that a refusal to support the benevolent institutions shall be an offence, for which members may be expelled. Tabled.

Israel Chamberlayne proposed that after Monday next there be no more petitions received. Tabled.

Mr. Disbro offered the following, which was laid on the table:

*Resolved*, That the Committee on Boundaries be instructed to conform the lines of Conference to the line of States as far as practicable.

Mr. Pearne, of Wyoming, offered the following, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That all the petitions and memorials on the subject of lay representation in our Church, be referred from the Committee on Itineracy, to a special committee of five.

Mr. Mattison offered the following, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That the committee on Missions be instructed to ascertain and report to this body, at their earliest convenience, the amount of missionary money appropriated to the Kentucky Mission and Arkansas Conference during the last four years.

Mr. Pearne proposed that the Missionary Committee have members from the Pacific work who may communicate by letter and vote by proxy.

A resolution was proposed requesting that the Bishop appoint preachers to the editorial charge of papers under the patronage of the Annual Conference, although they might be unofficial.

It was voted that after Monday next the call for memorials be suspended, yet allowing of their presentation. Passed by 71 to 53.

Conference adjourned.

#### EIGHTEENTH DAY.

*May 21.—Morning Session.*—Bishop Scott presided. After the Minutes were read and approved, reports were called for.

The committee on Revisals reported an amendment respecting the relation of baptized children. They are recognized as introduced into a visible covenant relation with God. A record is to be kept by the preacher—they are to be encouraged to attend class at an early day, and when a desire for salvation is manifest they are to be put down among the probationers of the Church. When by orphanage or otherwise they are deprived of guardians, the preacher is to report their case to the stewards, who are instructed to provide for them. This plan lays on the table for one day.

The committee further report sundry verbal alterations.

The committee on Missions reported amended constitution.

The committee on Tract cause ditto. Both lie over.

The committee on Book Concern had recommended lessening the size of the S. S. Advocate one-half, and making the price twenty-five cents per year—publishing it so as to meet its costs, and strictly a child's paper. Adopted.

The report respecting the German work was now considered. It was laid on the table finally and a resolution adopted, that the Missionary Society pay \$1000 yearly, for

four years, to aid the Rev. S. J. Jacoby in publishing books in Bremen suitable to the German work.

A very interesting discussion arose during the period this was under consideration. It had at first been proposed that the Book Agents appropriate this money. But it was opposed mainly on account of the heavily embarrassed condition of the Concern.

T. Carlton stated that they owed borrowed money and unpaid instalments to the Church South, and prospective bills for the expense of this General Conference and the support of the Episcopacy making in all for the coming four years \$250,000, in addition to the amount necessary to carry on the business for the same time.

J. V. Watson declared during the discussion, with ringing emphasis, that "It is in the power of this General Conference to do at this juncture of the affairs of the Concern, that by which it would be pushed to the precipice of bankruptcy.

It was voted also to authorize the establishment of a Sabbath School paper in the German language.

The committee ordered on Lay Delegation was announced to-day. It consists of D. W. Clarke, Yocum, Martin, Pillsbury.

Various persons sought to get the floor to present reports. J. A. Collins called attention to the fact that Dr. Raymond was waiting to get the floor, to present his report on Slavery.

SLAVERY.—Miner Raymond, chairman of the committee on Slavery, said, "I have in my hand the report of the committee on Slavery, which I shall be glad to present.

Dr. Durbin—I wish, sir, to ask the chairman, sir, through you, a question, in the hearing of the conference.

This was agreed to by Br. Raymond.

"Then, sir, I wish to ask him at what hour that report was agreed upon by the majority of the committee?"

Raymond. "It was adopted finally last evening."

Durbin. This was as recently as six o'clock last evening. The minority, as I supposed, had consented to the presentation of this report at this time. But the minority are not ready, and may wish to have this report withheld until they are prepared to report. I do not myself so desire. Yet it may be their wish, and I wish an opportunity now for them to express their minds.

J. A. Collins—It is not necessary, Doctor.

A general clamor was heard. "Read the report." "Let's have it now." "We are ready."

Mr. Raymond. We had not heard anything about a minority report until within one hour and a half. No notice was given of any such purpose during the sessions of the committee. If any report, or proposition, or resolution, did hereafter appear, he conceived that it would come from individual members of the body, and not be recognized as minority report of the committee, for that had adjourned sine die.

To this view of the case sundry exceptions were made by various members, who deemed it the province of the minority to report with or without notice.

Mr. Raymond—Before proceeding to read the report he wished to say a few words on a question of privilege. Not as chairman of the committee, but as an individual member of the body. To put a document of the grave and important character of this report on its passage, under the disadvantages and embarrassments that surround this, must be anything but friendly to the processes of impartial legislation.

I do not speak of out-door pressure. That is to be expected. We have no right to complain of it. Nor of any efforts from the lobby. This we look for. But it is a very different thing when influences originate within the bar of this General Conference, calculated to embarrass and hedge up the way of our legitimate action. It is currently reported—

Clamoring was heard on all sides. "Read, read."

Bishop Scott deemed any remarks out of order before the reading of the report.

M. Raymond. If the chair so decide, I must desist. But the report comes to you surrounded by and under the pressure of difficulties causing unreasonable prejudices that have arisen—

Confusion again prevailed for some minutes. He wished to say what some did not wish to hear.

M. Raymond. I wish to indulge in a few remarks which I deem myself entitled to make, on the ground of privilege. Do I understand the chairman to decide that I am not in order?

. Bishop Scott. I don't see the question of privilege.

From various quarters the cry came of "read, read, read!" So he read to a silent and attentive audience as follows:

#### REPORT ON SLAVERY—NEW CHAPTER.

The Committee on Slavery present the following as their report :

That the reduction of a moral and responsible being to the condition of property is a violation of natural rights, is considered by most men an axiom in ethics, but whatever opinions may have obtained in general society, the Methodist Episcopal Church has ever maintained an unmistakable anti-slavery position. Affirmations that slavery is founded in the philosophy of civil society, that it "is the corner-stone of Republican Institutions," or that it "is sanctioned by the Bible," have never met with an approving response in our Church. Contrariwise, the founder of Methodism denounced the system in unqualified terms of condemnation, and the Fathers unwaveringly followed the example of the venerated Wesley.

The M. E. Church has, in good faith, in all the periods of its history, proposed to itself the question, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the Evil of Slavery?" and it has never ceased, openly and before the world, to bear its testimony against the sin, and to exercise its disciplinary powers to the end, that its members might be kept unspotted from criminal connection with the system, and that the evil itself be removed from among men.

It is affirmed and believed that the M. E. Church have done more to diffuse anti-slavery sentiments, to mitigate the evils of the system, and to abolish the Institution from civil society than any other organization, either political, social, or religious. It is also affirmed and believed that the administration of Discipline in our Church, within the bounds of Slave territory, have faithfully done all that, under their circumstances, they have conscientiously judged to be in their power *to answer the ends of the Discipline in exterminating that great evil.*

At this period in our history we are met with the inquiry, does our book of discipline state clearly and definitely our true position, and our real sentiments? Does the letter of the statute distinctly indicate the practice we propose? We

answer *no*, and give from among others the following reasons for our negative reply. The discipline does not, in express terms, make the slaveholder ineligible to the Episcopacy, and yet the general Conference of '44 considered itself justified, both by the spirit of the discipline and the acknowledged preacher of the Church, in affirming that the relation of slaveholder was a disqualification for the office of a Bishop, and this it did at the expense of an ever-to-be regretted division of our ecclesiastical organization. The discipline declares that "when any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slavey conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives, but the administration assuming that legal emancipation in the case of traveling preachers, universally practicable, does not admit a slaveholder to the itinerant connection.

Again, our discipline does not distinguish between mercenary slaveholding and the holding of a slave for benevolent purposes, and yet all the arguments found in our official publications, or heard in our Conference debates, by which the admission of slaveholders to church membership is justified, are based upon this distinction, and that for the obvious reason that the distinction itself does really and justly exist in the public mind, and the practice referred to cannot otherwise be justified. Our book of discipline does not expressly enjoin it upon our members that they secure to their slaves the sanctity of the conjugal and parental relations, and yet within all the borders of our slave holding territory, the uttered suspicion that Methodists are negligent in these regards would be repelled with indignation.

We now enquire whether the time has come when it becomes the duty of the church through its representatives assembled in its highest ecclesiastical court, to so revise the statutes of the church as to make them express our real sentiments, and indicate our practice as it is? We answer, first, because it is just and equal: it is right before God and all men that on a subject involving directly the personal liberties of thousands, and indirectly of millions, of our fellow men, the position of the church should be neither equivocal or doubtful.—Secondly, because we cannot answer it to our own consciences, nor to God, the Judge of all, if we fail to

do what is in our power to bear testimony against so great an evil. Thirdly, because it is solemnly demanded at our hands by a very large majority of those whom we represent ; and fourthly, because the signs of the times plainly indicate that it is the duty of all good men to rally for the relief of the oppressed, and for the defense of the liberties transmitted to us by our fathers.

We are aware that it is objected that in the present excited state of the public mind to take any action on the subject will be to place a weapon in the hands of our enemies, with which they may do us essential injury. We reply that in all cases to say one thing, and mean another, is of doubtful *expediency* as well as of doubtful morality. We judge the rather that on all questions vital to morality and religion, the honor of the church is better sustained by an unqualified declaration of the truth.

We come now to state what, as it seems to us, is, always has been, and ever should be, the true position of our church in respect to slavery. We hold that the buying, selling, and by inference, the holding of a human being, as property, is a sin against God and man ; that because of the social relations in which men may be placed by the civil codes of slaveholding communities, the legal relation of master to slave may, in some circumstances, submit innocently ; that connection with slavery is *prima facie* evidence of guilt ; that in all cases of alleged criminality of this kind, the burden of proof should rest upon the accused, he always having secured to him the advantages of trial and appeal before impartial tribunals. In view of this, these facts and principles, the committee recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

*Resolved* 1st. By the delegates of the several annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, that we recommend the several annual Conferences so to amend our General Rule on Slavery as to read—The buying, selling, or holding a human being as property.

*Resolved*, 2d. By the delegates of the several Annual conferences in General Conference assembled, that the following be and hereby is substituted in the place of the present seventh chapter of our book of discipline, to wit :

What shall be done for the Extirpation of the Evil of Slavery ? Ans. 1. We declare we are as much as ever convinced of the great Evil of Slavery. We believe that all

men, by nature, have an equal right to Freedom, and that no man has a moral right to hold a fellow being as property. Therefore, no slaveholder shall be eligible to membership in our church hereafter, where emancipation can be effected without injury to the Slave : But, inasmuch as persons may be brought into the legal relation of slaveholders, voluntarily, or involuntarily, by purchasing slaves in order to free them, therefore, the merely legal relation shall not be considered, of itself, sufficient to exclude a person who may thus sustain it, from the fellowship of the Church.

Ans. 2. Whenever a member of our church, by any means, becomes the owner of a slave, it shall be the duty of the Preacher in charge to call together a committee, of at least three members, who shall investigate the case, and determine the time in which such slave shall be free, and on his refusal or neglect to abide by the decision of said committee, he shall be dealt with as in case of immorality.

Ans. 3. It shall be the duty of all our members and probationers, who may sustain the legal relation of slaveholder, to teach their servants to read the word of God ; to allow them to attend the public worship of God, on our regular days of Divine service ; to protect them in the observance of the duties of the Conjugal and Parental relations ; to give them such compensation for their services as may, under the circumstances, be just and equal ; to make such provisions as may be legally practicable, to prevent them and their posterity from passing into perpetual slavery, and to treat them in all respects, as required by the law of love.

Ans. 4. It shall be the duty of our Preachers prudently to enforce the above rules.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

M. RAYMOND, *Chairman.*

J. A. Collins.—With all respect I wish to enquire of Dr. Raymond, if he reports that first resolution as having been adopted by the committee—proposing to pass the rule on Slavery through the Conferences for revision and change.

M. Raymond.—“I do sir. It was adopted last evening before we adjourned.”

J. A. Collins.—“I believe you are right. I had forgotten it.”

Quite an effort was made to prevent its being printed, until the minority report was printed also.

J. A. Collins, gave notice that there would be a meeting of the minority to prepare a report, this afternoon at half past 3 o'clock.

M. Raymond enquired, "What harm will it do to have this report printed before the minority report is ready."

J. A. Collins—"If Bro. Raymond wishes the report printed, I will no longer object."

M. Raymond—"I certainly do think it necessary that it should be printed at once. I want it to go before the people immediately, to counteract, and dis-abuse their minds of impressions made by the unjust and extraneous pressure under which this report has been introduced, and of which I have not been allowed to speak."

It was then decided to print it.

Charles Blakeslee, rose to say, that in view of the new posture of affairs as indicated by the proposal for a minority report, he should himself free to act independent of that report, if he judged it proper. He wished not to be bound by that report.

After various motions and counter motions with a view to hear other reports, the Conference adjourned.

#### NINETEENTH DAY.

*May 22—Morning Session.*—Bishop Simpson presided.

After the minutes were corrected reports were called for.

Dr. Thompson presented a report from the Education Committee favorable to Biblical Institutes, yet guarding them from abuse or misuse.

J. Brooks, from Committee on Colored people reported the history of the efforts to establish a College for colored people. It appeared that a property near Xenia, consisting of 54 acres of land, a large building with 200 rooms, all furnished, and several cottages, the whole costing \$40,000, could be bought for 13,500, if accepted before Saturday next.

It is proposed at present to put it in charge of a white Principal. The detail of what was proposed to be done is given at length, and looks to the preparation of teachers, and the general elevation of this people in this country, and ultimately the redemption of Africa.

Dr. Thompson also presented resolutions and an Address relating to the mission of the Irish delegation. They sanc-

tion the efforts to raise \$100,000—request the Bishops to lay the subject before the Annual Conferences ; to appoint any helpers necessary ; to send preachers who may volunteer, to Ireland for two or three years—and also instruct the delegates to the English Conference to visit the Irish Conference also.

Mr. R. Scott gave a history of the Irish Conference, and showed how much they had to do in order with their feeble means to continue their operations from year to year. They have 150 preachers and 20,000 members. And had raised \$25,000 a year to sustain their missionary work. The address entire we do not deem it necessary to report.

T. B. Sargent gave an interesting account of his visit with Bishop Soule to that country in 1842. The people received them as angels. Their number was then 24,000. The present diminution was occasioned by the large emigration and destructive famine of a few years since. He favored sending preachers to that country.

Dr. Thompson related some interesting facts showing the enthusiasm that clusters about the American character in Europe, and argued the success of American preachers in Ireland.

Dr. McClintock related incidents of his personal experience when visiting Ireland, tending to corroborate Dr. Thompson's remarks.

The resolutions and an Address were adopted.

J. A. Collins asked for the suspension of the order of the day that he might present the minority report on Slavery.

#### SLAVERY REPORT—THE MINORITY.

On coming forward he said he had a question he wished to submit to the minority. When they met to agree on a report, it was determined to append the names of those who dissented from the majority report. Hence the document commences "we the undersigned." Since preparing their report, in view of the fact that the majority report was signed only by the chairman, he thought this should come up in like manner. He therefore in open conference submitted the question shall these words be struck out. None dissented.

W. B. Disbro enquired how large the minority was.

J. A. Collins replied that the exact number he did not know, but it was a very large minority.

H. Bangs asked that the number agreeing to the majority report be given. A great deal of confusion followed, some insisting on the question and others opposing it. Dr. Durbin especially persisted in repeating the demand.

Mr. Raymond, chairman, did not remember the exact number. He believed that the report was adopted by 18 to 14.

J. A. Collins—yes, that's it I think.

J. P. Durbin—That, sir, was the first vote. The last stood 17 to 16.

After an additional chapter of excitement the minority report was read.

*Report of the Minority of the Committee on Slavery made to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, May 22, 1856.*

The undersigned constituting the minority of the Committee on Slavery, not being able to agree with the majority in the conclusions to which they have come, contained in their report to the General Conference, beg leave respectfully to submit the reasons for their dissent as follows :

1. The chapter proposed by the majority, in lieu of the one now in the Discipline on Slavery, is manifestly in conflict with the constitution of our church. In the first answer to the question, "what shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of Slavery?" It is provided that "no slaveholder shall be eligible to membership in our church hereafter, where emancipation can be effected, without injury to the slave;" which creates a condition of membership unknown to the Discipline, and which cannot be enacted under the General Rule as it now stands in relation to Slavery. This feature is intended to bear upon applicants for admission into our societies. The second answer reaches members now in our church, who, "by any means," may become the owners of slaves, and also those who are at present slaveholders, if they should come into the possession of more.—In either of these cases, the party is to be brought before a committee to "determine the time in which" the slaves shall be freed," and in the event of "refusal" or "neglect" to comply with the decision of the committee, he is to be "dealt with as in case of immorality," thus clearly making

emancipation, and in effect, non-slaveholding, a term of communion or church fellowship with us. Before this provision can be engrafted upon the Discipline constitutionally, the General Rule with respect to Slavery must be essentially altered, which can only be done by compliance with the proviso to the sixth restriction, which says—" *Provided*, nevertheless, that upon the concurrent recommendation of three-fourths of all the members of the several Annual Conferences, who shall be present and vote on such recommendation, then a majority of two-thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions excepting the first article; and also, whenever such alteration or alterations shall have been first recommended by two-thirds of the General Conference, so soon as three-fourths of the members of all the Annual Conferences shall have concurred as aforesaid, such alteration or alterations shall take effect." It is not proposed in the report of the majority of the committee to submit their action to the operation of this constitutional method, but to carry it by a mere majority of this General Conference, leaving the General Rule as it is, which, if successful, and the proposed chapter be placed in the Discipline, will be a palpable violation of the constitution.

2. Because our Discipline, as we understand it, is probably now as strongly opposed to Slavery as the state and circumstances of the case will allow.

3. Because we are clearly understood to be, and are accepted and treated as a church opposed to Slavery, yet having due regard to the authority of the State.

4. Because our practice under the Discipline is faithful, and fruitful of good, restraining the traffic, and working the cheerful and voluntary emancipation of many slaves.

5. Because we are deeply convinced that any increased stringency of the Discipline on the subject of Slavery, will greatly weaken, if not destroy our church in the slaveholding States, and along the border.

6. Because this reduction of our influence as a Church, instead of promoting what the majority desire, will very much *retard* the cause of individual and ultimate emancipation, and much endanger and diminish the welfare of the slaves, for, as regards the slave, we are the only Church which exercises any permanent ministry and watch-care over

the colored population within those conferences which are to be affected by the proposed measures of the majority. We have many and populous Churches among the colored people, and our access to them depends upon the good will of their masters. By the adoption of the measures proposed, we shall be to a great extent forbidden to preach to the slaves.

7. The reasons alleged above are founded on the universal testimony without any variation of our brethren who labor in the border work, and it is in accordance with current information; and we respectfully submit that such testimony ought to be admitted and be conclusive in the absence of all rebutting-testimony. And we believe if the Church generally were rightly informed as to the true state of the case, she would not only be satisfied, but would approve of letting the Discipline remain as it is. And we suggest that the best way to inform the Church, is to publish the alleged facts under the authority of this General Conference. We are happy to perceive that the report of the majority agrees with the position herein assumed.

8. We respectfully suggest also, that in 1848, we repudiated the "plan of separation" to enable us to go to our brethren in the border work, and they received us expressly on the ground of the Discipline as it is, and because they were opposed to the policy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the subject of slavery. And it does not seem to us expedient, or indeed just, now to force upon them further measures, which, in their judgment, will very seriously cripple, if not extinguish the word among them.

9. Because we understand that our brethren of the majority report do not expect that the measures they propose will aid in our border work, to assist us in ameliorating the condition of the slave population; but we judge that they must feel convinced from the testimony in committee, that their proposed measures will embarrass it much. We cheerfully do them the justice to say that they sincerely believe the measures they propose are right, and that therefore the border work ought to bear the embarrassments that may follow. It is for this General Conference to judge and pronounce in the case.

10. Because we believe that all right minded men who have had favorable opportunities to observe, or to become

responsible pastors in our border work, have come to the conclusions expressed above: and hence, we respectfully submit that our brethren who sympathise with the majority report should accept such testimony.

11. Because, finally, we are of opinion that the course indicated above, is the proper way to exercise a healthful and legitimate influence on the question of slavery, and indeed, the only way, in which it can be done. By taking this course, we do not repudiate or assault the authority of the State but institute a course of moral discipline, which, acting with the legitimate influence of the Gospel, will confer the greatest benefit upon both master and slave. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That we non-concur in the action of the majority.

Respectfully submitted.

Signed in behalf of the minority of the Committee on Slavery.

JOHN A. COLLINS, *Cairman*.

Geo. Peck moved that the report be tabled and printed. It was finally agreed to print both reports in pamphlet form and strike off 5000 copies.

H. Slicer moved that the names of all the members of the committee be attached to the respective reports. Some one suggested, and the Conferences they represent be designated.

E. E. Griswold of New York East Conf., did not know where that would place him. He would be in a very awkward position. He did not know which to attach his name to. He had voted against the specific change recommended in the majority report when it was under consideration, separate from the balance of the report, because he preferred something different. Yet when the whole report was presented for adoption he had voted for the report. Now he did not know where he belonged. If any brother can tell me where I am, said he, it will be a favor.

J. B. Finley exclaimed, "You are on the fence!"

W. B. Disbro, said that some of the committee were not satisfied with either report. Which report should they sign?

H. Slicer—"They can certainly make an election, brother, between them."

W. B. Disbro—"Let those who favor one or the other report, sign it. That would meet the case."

H. Slicer—"I am willing to accommodate those who cannot tell what they prefer, who don't know which side of the fence they are on." [Laughter.]

C. Kingsley, hoped it would not prevail. He did not see the propriety of publishing in permanent form, the names of 34 or 35 men attached to documents unofficial, neither of which may receive the sanction of this body.

Dr. Durbin, did not deem the motion necessary. He and Mr. Slicer disagreed as to the usage on reference to minority reports.

M. Raymond had no personal objection to the course proposed. But it was an unusual course and without sufficient cause. It will dissolve the committee into its individual elements, and destroy its action as a corporate body, if I may so speak—or as an organized committee. We had never heard of any such thing as a body requiring both majorities and minorities to attach their names to reports.

After a further contest, H. Slicer said, "I will withdraw the proposition. I thought it would be agreeable to all parties. He did not want to get any body into difficulties.

The appeal case of Oliver Burgess was taken up. He had been censured by the N. Ohio Conference for mal-administration, but his character passed. His withdrawal from the connection was then presented and put on record. Two days afterward his case was reconsidered and his character left unpassed. In view of this Mr. Burgess appealed.

As he had now for years been pastor of a Congregational Church, his appeal was not entertained. But in view of the singular action of the Conference in suspending the character of a man by the reconsideration of the vote passing his character, whom they had *no control* over whatever, it was referred to the committee on Itinerancy for special action.

Bishop Waugh presented several memorials—one from the Young Men's Christian Association, of Baltimore, asking a donation of books—one from Dr. Roberts, remonstrating against striking out the rule for band meetings—one from sundry persons on a school for colored people.

J. B. Merwin presented a remonstrance from 28 members of Green street Church, New York city, against action on slavery. Also one from J. W. Harper and others of Sand street Church, Brooklyn, of the same character.

A. J. Phelps, a memorial asking for a Depository at Auburn, N. Y.

J. Watts, a memorial on P. E. question, one on the exten-

sion of time, and one for lay Delegation, from the churches in Rochester.

J. B. Finley, a memorial from some of the members of Raper Chapel, Dayton, O., asking some change against slavery:

G. F. Brown, of N. J., presented a memorial from the colored local preachers in New Jersey, asking to have a mission Conference organized.

Various memorials were offered of minor importance. Sundry resolutions were offered. Among them was one signed by W. Young, of Cincinnati Conference, and William Cooper, of Philadelphia, proposing to amend the chapter or section about receiving ministers from other denominations, so as to include "the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

After the presentation of various resolutions, the Conference adjourned.

#### TWENTIETH DAY.

*May 23—Morning Session.*—Conference assembled at the usual hour. Bishop Baker in the Chair. The religious services were conducted by Mr. Roberts of Oregon.

The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Lowry raised the question that the minutes were incorrect in their allusions to the minority report on slavery. Mr. Lowry inquired, "How do we know that we have a minority report?" We know that John A. Collins presented a report, but we do not know that it is a report of a minority of the committee, except so far as he is concerned. Those who submitted that report were a self-constituted committee, of which John A. Collins is Chairman. There is a reason why this irregularity should be corrected. Yesterday the question was raised how many signed the report of the minority? Dr. Durbin said it was adopted by a vote of sixteen to fifteen. (Several interposed, and said Dr. Durbin stated seventeen to sixteen.)

Mr. Raymond objected to this whole proceeding. It was wrong in a question of this character, a grave and solemn question, that there should be an entanglement of it by these side issues.

Mr. Collins inquired if the journals did not state the facts. (A general conversation ensued in which several participated, but the objection of Brother Lowry was overruled.)

On motion of Mr. Flowers, the special order of the day was taken up, which was the appeal case of John Deming, of the Erie Conference, against the action of said Conference.

Mr. Flowers stated that Mr. Deming was connected with another church, when

On motion of T. J. Quigley, the appeal was not entertained.

On motion of Mr. Lowry, the report on slavery, was taken up.

Mr. Raymond moved the adoption of the second resolution. Mr. R. remarked, I do this at the request of brethren, and not because of any personal preferences.

Dr. Durbin rose to a question of order. It was, whether it was in order to take up a resolution at the end of a report, before considering the argument leading to that conclusion, as set forth in the preamble.

Mr. Quigley objected to this mode of proceeding. If it were desirable or important to consider the second resolution first, why not put it first in order in the report. He would be in favor of re-committing the report, to enable the Committee to arrange its report in the proper order. It is a strange mode of proceeding to report the resolutions as they are, and then to move to take up the second. If the reason assigned is that the argument of the whole case will be on the second resolution, then why did not the Committee so arrange it first? I hope we will not go to work in that way, but take up the report as presented; and if not willing to do that, let the report be re-committed, that it may be put into proper form.

(The chair decided these objections to be out of order, and gave the floor to Mr. Raymond.) The first and second resolutions were now read, and,

Mr. Raymond proceeded—(Mr. Collins asked permission of Mr. R. to introduce a motion to suspend the fifteen minutes rule, he said: In 1844, when a much less important question was pending before the Conference, that rule was suspended, and if that rule is made to operate now, it will be equivalent to the previous questions.)

Mr. Raymond said—I would be glad to talk an hour, if I thought I knew so much more than others, or could talk better than others; but there are others, and many others,

who know as much of this question as I do, and who can express themselves as well, and I do not want to prevent them.

Mr. Dodge was in favor of taking off all restriction in the progress of this debate, and give full scope to the speakers.

Mr. Parks, of Oneida, objected to the motion, that it was easy for some men who could get the floor to wear out two or three weeks in this discussion, while a large numbers of others will not be able to speak at all.

Dr. McClintock said, if this rule is not suspended, we shall hear all over the country that the gag-law has been applied.

Dr. Thompson said he had hoped we would have a full and free discussion. No man can do it in fifteen minutes, and no man who respects himself and his character would undertake to discuss it in fifteen minutes.

Mr. Slicer said, Providence has only given to a few men the power of condensing their thoughts into such a narrow compass, and those who have such a gift ought not to abridge those who have not. He hoped the brethren who had been accustomed to discuss these questions through the papers for years, would let the subject have free debate, and if it lasts a week, so much the better. I hope the brethren will not put the gag on.

Mr. Finley said, the understanding abroad is, that the anti-Slavery men have a majority here, and if you enforce the fifteen minutes rule, they will say you have put on the gag-law. I want an open field and a fair fight.

Mr. Watson said, if this matter is to be discussed, I have a word or two to say. These brethren who want an open field and a fair fight, assume what ought not to be assumed, viz : that some one or two, or three men, ought to discuss this whole subject. Let one brother take his time and condense his thoughts, and if fifteen minutes are not enough, let him have more. What is the meaning of this talk of an open field and a fair fight ?

Mr. Watson thought fifteen minutes were not long enough. It is now alledged that we have instituted this rule as an anti-Slavery majority to put down the minority.

Mr. Collins rose to a point of order and remarked in reply to something we did not hear, "There is not a pro-Slavery man on this floor."

The Chair here interposed and assigned the floor to Mr. Raymond.

Mr Raymond said, when I consider the character of the body here assembled, ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ—men who are renewed by the Holy Ghost, called to preach the everlasting gospel to perishing millions ; by consecration devoted to that work, with an eye single to the glory of God, and drawing all the motives for their action from the retributions of eternity ; and when I consider the nature of the business which now engages us, that of legislating for the Church of God, which is organized in all its arrangements to this intent that now “unto principalities and powers, &c., might be known to the church, the manifold wisdom of “God.” When also, I consider the results of our discussions, results connected with the temporal and eternal happiness of the flocks committed to our care, results to our children and children’s children, through all time to come, results that no finite mind can anticipate, I cannot allow myself for a moment to believe that any other than the one question will be permitted to engage the attention of any one of us, in the discussion of any matter that shall come before us.

In the discussion of this question, the character of the men comprising this body, the nature of the work in which we are engaged, and the inconceivable results of our action, force upon me the conviction that but one question will be considered, but one principle will influence us. That one question decided, all others are decided, and that one question is, are the measures proposed in this report *right* ?

I cannot believe for a moment that any one of these men will allow himself for a moment to give attention to any other than this one question. Is the measure right ? Is it just and equal ? Is it well pleasing in the sight of God ?

This question never pressed on my own consciousness of obligation, as it does on this blessed, bright morning. Never has my position, as a being responsible at the bar of God, and a candidate for eternity made a deeper influence upon me, of the importance of having a single eye to the truth and glory of God.

The question is, are the doctrines of this report true ? Its doctrines are two. First, that the reduction of a human being to the condition of property is wrong, and secondly, that individuals may be connected with the system innocent-

ly, and even virtuously. That men may purchase and hold slaves for benevolent purposes, and may claim, in doing so, the fulfilment of that promise that a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall not lose its reward.

We recur to the question, are these doctrines true? Is slavery in this sense, wrong? May a man own a slave in this sense, and be an innocent man?

The only consistent opponents to this report, are of two classes—those who hold slavery to be right, to be a divine institution, founded on the philosophy of society, sanctioned by the Bible, a thing for which we should be thankful to God. Those who hold this view must conscientiously oppose our report.

On the other hand the report is consistently opposed only by those who hold that the relation cannot innocently exist under any circumstances. But in the language of the report, no such doctrine is taught—no such design is apparent. No such position has been taken by our discipline in the history of Methodism? If the measures proposed in the report indicate such a sentiment, I have been unable to understand it.

The measures proposed are in perfect parallelism to the doctrines I have stated. If I supposed they were not, I would be willing to stay here twelve months and discuss them. I never would make the door of the church narrower than the gate to heaven. I do believe Christian men, children of God and heirs of glory, may innocently sustain the relation. These are the doctrines of the church, if we understand language. In the minority report, the only points raised are not those of the rightfulness or otherwise, but of expediency.

What a contrast is here presented between the moral sublimity of the subject and the argument. A question of personal liberty involving the moral and eternal interests of millions created in the image of God, purchased by the blood of the incarnate Deity, moved upon by the Holy Ghost, capable of the highest glory—on such a question, men descend from considerations of righteousness and truth to discuss questions of expediency. On what times have we fallen, in what an age—when we, the strongest Church in the world, followers of him who was spit upon, scourged, derided, whose disciples in other ages “wandered about in sheep-skins and

goat-skins, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, of whom the world was not worthy," that we, their followers, should descend from the sublimity of this question of truth and righteousness to deliberate on questions of expediency.

It is said, the provisions of this chapter are in conflict with the general rule, and that, to adopt this chapter or to do anything at all, will close up all access to the slaves.

The questions are those of constitutionality and usefulness.

For the sake of the argument, let it be admitted that the chapter proposed is unconstitutional. 1, Then remember it is not denied that the doctrines of this report are true and its measures right. It is right but not constitutional. Shall we therefore reject that which is right because unconstitutional? Is this good logic? Is it not a *non sequitor*?

Those who raise the question of the unconstitutionality of the new chapter proposed, are bound to put their hands to the removal of the constitutional difficulty. The doctrines of the report being true, admitting that the chapter may not be constitutionally adopted, what is the inference? It is, that every good man should put his hand and his heart to the removal of the constitutional difficulty, should let it go the annual conferences and thus remove the constitutional difficulty of doing what we believe is *right*.

We admit the unconstitutionality of the chapter, only for the sake of the argument. We deny that it is so. It does not contain a new term of membership. It recognizes slaveholders as in the church. In nearly every passage of the chapter proposed, it is contemplated that persons may sustain the relation for purposes that are laudable. I beg attention to the fact that in the chapter from Alpha to Omega, every provision, but one, which I do not wish to have out, does contemplate the existence of Slavery among members—even among probationers in the church. It cannot be made out by any fair argument—by any reasonable construction of the chapter proposed, that non-Slaveholding is, in all cases, a bar to church membership. It simply indicates that mercenary slaveholding is sinful, and ought to be subjected to church discipline. (Time expired.)

Dr. Perry moved that the 10th rule, restricting members to fifteen minutes, be suspended during the discussion.

The question, on motion of Mr. Bangs, after a long discussion, was now taken, and resulted and follows: Yeas 114, Nays 103.

Mr. Brockway moved that the speakers be limited to thirty minutes. Adopted.

Mr. Coombs said, I wish to say to Dr. Raymond that the simple question with me is, is this action proposed by the majority right? My conclusion is, it is wrong.

My conclusion is drawn from the report and from the report alone. The report proves two things. First, that this General Conference has no power to make the change proposed. Secondly, the report shows as clear as sunlight that if it had the power, there is no necessity to make the change. So whether it has or has not the power, it would be wrong to make that change, seeing there is no necessity for it. Now I proceed to prove these two propositions:

That it has no power. I want to call your attention to this report, for from this alone I draw my argument.

This report was written and adopted by Northern, Anti-Slavery men. I say this to distinguish them from Southern Anti-Slavery men. And those who have written and presented this report, desire a change in our discipline. Now, what their report teaches they ought to be willing to abide by. What does the report admit? 1st, That this General Conference has no power to alter the general rule. Not only is this admitted, but this report asks that we recommend the Annual Conferences to change this rule. If the General Conference had the power, it would not ask the Annual Conferences to do it. If this General Conference has no power to change the *rule*, it has no power to do the same thing in the chapter.

This report admits it has no power to change the rule, and therefore it has no power to do it in any other part of the book. I want to ask the friends of that report, if this new rule were in the book, what explanation would the advocates of this report give to that new rule? This question has not been touched. The explanation would be precisely the same that is contained in this new chapter and no other.

This report declares that the relation may exist innocently. That the merely legal relation shall not prevent persons from church fellowship. Therefore, if this new rule were in the book it would do no more than is proposed to be done in

this chapter. As Dr. Raymond has well and beautifully argued here, they would not propose to exclude the innocent. Now, then, I ask you to go back. Suppose this new rule was in the book, and we were acting under it, would the chapter proposed, give any higher expression or greater force to that rule. The exposition of that new rule which they admit they have not the power to put in would be the same explanation they give it in this new chapter. Now, if that new rule would authorize no more or higher action, but the same that this chapter proposes, and they have not power to change the rule, have they the power to put in the new chapter? But they say they have not power to change the rule so as to punish the guilty and protect the innocent.

Again, this report, according to its own showing, and I am judging them by their own document, proves conclusively and clearly, that if the General Conference had the power, there is no necessity for its exercise, because every claim they make is met.

1. The new chapter is not necessary to change the position of the Church.

That report teaches that the M. E. Church has, in good faith, in all the periods of its history, proposed to itself the question, "What shall be done for the extirpation of Slavery!" and it has never ceased, openly and before the world, to bear its testimony against the sin, and to exercise its disciplinary powers to the end, that its members might be kept unspotted from criminal connection with the system, and that the evil itself be removed from among men.

The report says the M. E. Church has ever maintained an unmistakable anti-slavery position. If this is so, where is the necessity of any change in any part of our discipline. Our brethren of the majority must either annul their report, or abandon the proposed change. I call your attention to the peculiarly strong language used by the chairman of the committee, on the floor, and in this house. The chairman knows the use of language. The M. E. Church ever, ever what? maintained, maintained *what?* an unmistakable anti-slavery position. Can anything be stronger than that, and that position was anti-slavery.

2. This report proves that there is no necessity of any change in the Discipline to change the doctrines of the M. E.

Church. That Church has ever proposed to itself the question, "what shall be done," &c.

Here then is the testimony of our northern anti-slavery friends, intelligent men, men of God, men of piety, men of honesty, who went into the investigation of this subject, to come out and tell us that the doctrine of this church is sound and scriptural, and if this is so, in the name of God, of humanity, where is the propriety of changing what is sound, scriptural, &c? Is it right to change what is right?

3. There is no necessity of changing the Discipline on Slavery to change the *influence* of the church. What does the report say?—"It is affirmed and believed that the M. E. Church have done more to diffuse the anti-slavery sentiment, to mitigate the evils of the system, and to abolish the institution from civil society than any other organization, either political, social, or religious." Why sir, when I read that, I had liked to have said, glory to God. It was such an endorsement of our course by our northern anti-slavery brethren.

If that is the position—if we have stood high, head and shoulders above all other organizations in diffusing anti-slavery sentiments, and to abolish the institution from civil society, in the name of humanity, why do anything to jeopardize even that tremendous instrumentality?

4. The report proves that there is no necessity of changing the Discipline to change the practice and action of the church on Slavery.

"It is also affirmed and believed that the administrators of Discipline in our church, within the bound of Slave territory, have faithfully done all that, under their circumstances, they have conscientiously judged to be in their power *to answer the ends of the Discipline in terminating that great evil*."

Now, here is testimony to the practice and action of the Church; not in non-slaveholding territory, not in the North, not in the East, where the evil does not exist, but in slave territory. Now these points are sustained by the testimony of our brethren themselves. I ask then, in the name of humanity, what more can they ask or desire? These brethren say that we have not only done *well*, but have faithfully done all that could be done, to carry out the views of the majority report, and to ensure the end of the discipline—the

extermination of this great evil. If they had said "enter thou into the joys of thy Lord," it had been happy, but they come up and say, "well done," and then instead of saying, "enter thou into the joys of thy Lord," they send us back to the South, and take away our only means of doing the great work assigned us.

Let me review this argument : First, from the report we learn that the position of the Church is unmistakably anti-slavery, her doctrines are plain and sound, her influence wholesome and strong, and that her discipline has been faithfully administered in slaveholding territory. Now, sir, if that is the opinion of these brethren, I ask again what more do they want ? I ask them to stay their hands. If it is not necessary then, from this showing, is it not wrong to attempt this change ? It is not a question of expediency, but of right and wrong. If the brethren of the majority will let us alone we will go on breaking the chains of the oppressed, but if they chain us we can unchain no one else. (Time expired.)

Mr. Mattison said—I am a very poor debater, and have little hope of shedding much light upon this great question. And yet I have my opinions and my reasons for them, and desire, in common with others, to give utterance to both.

I am in favor of the report of the majority as it is, and cannot see the force of the objections urged against it by the last speaker. If I understand him it is this : The report admits that the Church has all along borne a testimony against Slavery quite as strong as this proposed new chapter, and that this new chapter is wholly unnecessary. This argument will apply both ways. If the assumption of the report is false, then further expression may be necessary, and Bro. Coombe's argument falls to the ground ; but if, on the other hand, the assumption of the report is true, as I firmly believe, then the proposed new chapter is perfectly in harmony with the testimony of the Church against Slavery from first to last, and cannot, therefore, be unconstitutional.

This is my position, that the General Rule on Slavery was designed to shut all slaveholding out of the Church, and that consequently the proposed new chapter is not in conflict with and does not go beyond the General Rule, but is in perfect harmony with it.

That the paragraph relating to Slavery in the general

rules was put there to prohibit the admission of slaveholders into the Church, is evident from the circumstances of its introduction into the general rules, and from the whole history of our Church, so far as this slavery is concerned, from first to last.

The general rule on Slavery was not put there by Mr. Wesley ; it was inserted at the Conference of 1789 in the following words :—"The buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or children, with an intention to enslave them." [Emory's History of the Discipline, page 181.] In 1792 the words "the bodies and souls" were stricken out, and in 1808 the word "and" was put in the place of "or" in two places, by some means, though not by authority of the Conference. Thus the rule now stands. Ibid.

Now let us go back and see what our fathers did respecting Slavery, before they introduced this clause into the general rule that we may ascertain what their objects was in placing it there.

The first recorded action upon this subject occurred in 1780, and is in the following words :

"Quest.—Does not this Conference acknowledge that Slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society ; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do unto us and ours ? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom ?"

"Ans. Yes."

Hist. of Dis. pa. 15.

Now let it be noted that this is not merely against a certain *kind* of Slavery, but against "Slavery," as "contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society ; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do unto us." Such was the platform upon which our fathers stood in 1784, or four years before our Church was organized in this country.

At the "Christmas Conference" as it is called, at which our Church was organized in 1784, the following was incorporated among the "rules and regulations," of the Church.

"Quest. 12. What shall we do with our friends that will buy and sell slaves ?"

"Ans. If they buy with no other design than to hold them

as slaves, and have been previously warned, they shall be expelled, and permitted to sell on no consideration."—Hist. of Dis., p. 21.

Here the object in view is equally apparent—it is to prohibit the *holding* of men as slaves. If they could neither buy nor sell them, they must, of necessity, cease to be property.

At this Conference our first Discipline was prepared; and in that discipline the following questions and answers were inserted:

"Quest. 42. What methods can we take to extirpate slavery?"

"Ans. We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established, excepting on the most pressing occasion; and such we esteem the practice of holding our fellow-creatures in slavery. We view it as contrary to the Golden law of God on which hang all the law and the prophets, and the unalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the revolution, to hold in the deepest debasement, in a more abject slavery than is perhaps to be found in any part of the world except America, so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.

"We therefore think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us; and for that purpose we add the following to the rules of our Society, viz:

1. Every member of our Society who has slaves in his possession, shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistant, (which notice the assistants are required immediately, and without any delay to give in their respective circuits,) legally execute and record an instrument whereby he emancipates and sets free every slave in his possession who is between the ages of forty and forty-five, immediately, or at farthest, when they arrive at the age of forty-five.

"And every slave who is between the ages of twenty-five and forty immediately, or at farthest at the expiration of five years from the date of the said instrument.

"And every slave who is between the ages of twenty and twenty-five immediately, or at farthest when they arrive at the age of thirty.

"And every slave under the age of twenty, as soon as they arrive at the age of twenty-five at farthest.

"And every infant born in slavery after the above mentioned rules are complied with immediately on its birth.

"2. Every assistant shall keep a journal, in which he shall regularly minute down the names and ages of all the slaves belonging to all the masters in his respective circuits, and also the date of every instrument executed and recorded for the manumission of the slaves, with the name of the court, book, and folio, in which the said instruments respectively shall have been recorded; which journal shall be handed down in each circuit to the succeeding assistants.

"3. In consideration that these rules form a new term of communion, every person concerned, who will not comply with them, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw himself from our society within the twelve months succeeding the notice given as aforesaid: otherwise the assistant shall exclude him in the society.

"4. No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or so excluded, shall ever partake of the supper of the Lord with the Methodists, till he complies with the above requisitions.

"5. No person holding slaves shall, in future, be admitted into society or to the Lord's supper, till he previously complies with these rules concerning slavery.

"N. B. These rules are to affect the members of our society no farther than as they are consistent with the laws of the States in which they reside.

"And respecting our brethren in Virginia that are concerned, and after due consideration of their peculiar circumstances, we allow them two years from the notice given, to consider the expedience of compliance or non-compliance with these rules.

"*Ques.* 43. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away?

"*Ans.* They are immediately to be expelled: unless they buy them on purpose to free them.

Here then it is perfectly obvious that the design of our fathers was "to extirpate slavery." The question of making new terms of communion was fully considered; and regarding it as a "most pressing occasion," fully justifying the measures they were about to adopt, they not only went as far as the report goes, by enacting that "no person holding slaves

shall in future be admitted into society or to the Lord's supper, till he previously complies with the rules concerning slavery," namely, liberates his slaves, but it goes much further, and provides for the exclusion of incorrigible slaveholders from the church. This was the theology of our fathers. This was the economy given us by those noble men, who laid the foundation of our church in this country, and gave us an organic existence. They were intent upon adopting "some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us."

The enactment of these just and righteous rules produced an excitement among the guilty slaveholders, as a matter of course; and the preachers, in 1785, alarmed at the cry of disaster and ruin which has always been raised when any effort has been made to condemn oppression, ingloriously yielded; and in about six months after the rules were published, they were suspended, by whose authority I know not, till the ensuing Annual Conference. Accordingly the following was inserted in the minutes for 1785:

"It is recommended to all our brethren to suspend the execution of the minutes on slavery till the deliberations of a future Conference; and that equal space of time be allowed all our members for consideration, when the minutes shall be put in force."—Hist. &c., p. 274-5.

But lest this should be understood as receding from their former position, and an abandonment of the effort for the extirpation of slavery from the church, the following was inserted immediately under the clause temporarily suspending the rules:

N. B. We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery; and shall not cease to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means.—Ibid, p. 275.

Let this passage be well pondered. Especially let it be noted that the evil complained of here, and in the suspended rules, is not the *buying* or *selling* of slaves merely, but "the practice of slavery"—the holding of a human being in bondage, and as property.

Now, the next action had, after the expression of such an abhorrence of slavery, and a determination "to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means," was to insert in the general rule the clause forbidding "*The buying and selling the bodies and souls of men, women or children, with the*

*intention to enslave them."* Now, will any man presume to say that the only object of that prohibition was to prevent buying and selling merely, while it allowed Methodists to hold slaves to any extent they pleased, and grow rich on their sweat and toil? The idea is preposterous. All the circumstances of that enactment show that it was placed there to make non-slaveholding a test of membership. It admits of no other construction; and instead of admitting that a statutory provision rendering slaveholders ineligible to admission into our Church, is in conflict with the general rules, I insist that the general rules have virtually made non-slaveholding a condition of membership since 1789, and that every slaveholder has been in our Church from that day to this, has been admitted in violation of the spirit and design of the general rule.

In 1796 Messrs. Coke and Ashbury appended their notes to the Discipline; and among those notes we find the following comment upon the general rule on slavery: "The buying and selling the souls and bodies of men, (for what is the body without the soul but a dead carcass?) is a complicate crime. It was indeed, *in some measure*, overlooked by the Jews by reason of the wonderful hardness of their hearts, as was the keeping of concubines and the divorcing of wives at pleasure, but it is totally opposite to the whole spirit of the Gospel. It has an immediate tendency to fill the mind with pride and tyranny, and is frequently productive of almost every act of lust and cruelty which can disgrace the human species. Even the moral philosopher will candidly confess, that if there is a God, every perfection he possesses must be opposed to a practice so contrary to every moral idea that can influence the human mind." Hist. of Dist., page 326-7.

Here let it be observed, that Slavery is classed with "keeping of concubines and the divorcing of wives at pleasure;" as a "complicate crime," against which every perfection of the Godhead is amazed. Remember, this is not the vaunting of some ranting fanatic or odious Abolitionist. It is Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, speaking as from their sepulchers, to the General Conference of the Church they organized.

The same year, namely, 1796, the original chapter VII, "of Slavery" was inserted in the Discipline, as follows .

" *Quest.* What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of this crying evil of African slavery ?

" *Ans.* 1. We declare that we are more than ever convinced of the great evil of the African slavery which still exists in these United States, and do most earnestly recommend to the yearly Conferences, quarterly meetings, and to those who have the oversight of districts and circuits, to be exceedingly cautious what persons they admit to official stations in our Church ; and in the case of future admission to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them immediately or gradually, as the laws of the States respectively, and the circumstances of the case will admit ; and we do fully authorize all the yearly conferences, to make whatever regulations they judge proper, in the present case, respecting the admission of persons to official stations in our Church.

" 2. No slaveholder shall be received into society till the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit has spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery.

" 3. Every member of the society who sells a slave shall immediately after full proof, be excluded the society. And if any member of our society purchase a *slave*, the ensuing quarterly meeting shall determine on the number of years in which the slave so purchased, would work out the price of his purchase. And the person so purchasing shall, immediately after such determination, execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave, at the extirpation of the term determined by the quarterly meeting. And in default of his executing such instrument of manumission, or on his refusal to submit his case to the judgment of the quarterly meeting, such member shall be excluded the society. *Provided also*, that in the case of a female slave, it shall be inserted in the aforesaid instrument of manumission, that all her children who shall be born during the years of her servitude, shall be free at the following times, namely : Every female child at the age of twenty-one, and every male child at the age of twenty-five. *Nevertheless*, if the member of our society, executing the said instrument of manumission, judge it proper he may fix the times of manumission of the children of the female slaves before mentioned, at an earlier age than that which is proscribed above.

" 4. The preachers and other members of our society are

requested to consider the subject of negro slavery with deep attention till the ensuing General Conference: and that they impart to the General Conference, through the medium of the yearly conferences, or otherwise, any important thoughts upon the subject, that the conference may have full light, in order to take further steps toward the eradicating this enormous evil from that part of the church of God to which they are unitee." *Hist. of Dis.*, p. 275.

Here it will be seen that the same unyielding purpose is apparent, viz: to "eradicate this enormous evil from the Church." The general rule was not then understood to tolerate slaveholding, and this chapter was enacted in perfect harmony with the rule.

In 1808 provision was made for a Delegated General Conference, to be held in 1812; and in defining the power of the General Conference, it was said, "They shall not revoke or change the general rules of the United Societies." So the restriction has stood ever since; and now it is argued, that to restore the chapter on Slavery, so far as to prohibit the future admission of slaveholders into the Church, is to change the general rule; and therefore we cannot do it without a vote of two-thirds of the General Conference, and three-fourths of all the Annual Conferences!

But has not that chapter been altered by the General Conference, so as to nullify the General Rule, even since the restrictive rule was adopted? In 1812 the following alteration was made:

"Whereas the laws of some of the States do not admit the emancipation of slaves, without a special act of the legislature; the General Conference authorize each Annual Conference to form their own regulation relative to buying and selling slaves."—*Hist.* p. 278.

Here "the laws of the States"—Slave States—are installed in place of God's Word; and even the "buying and selling of slaves" is taken from under the operation of the General Rule forbidding them, and handed over to the Conferences in slaveholding territory. Was not this virtually changing the General Rule? And was this proposed change sent around to the Annual Conferences? No, indeed. And the modern cry of "unconstitutionality," first uttered here, I am sorry to say, by our venerated, beloved Bishops, was not then heard of. It was all well enough when the legisla-

tion looked toward the widening of the door of the church for the ingathering of slaveholders, but the moment the slightest modification is proposed, looking for the elevation of the anti-slavery standard of our church to where it stood in the beginning, we are to be frightened out of our wits by the cry of "unconstitutionality." This very chapter has been altered four times since the restrictive rule became fundamental law with us ; by one of these changes the terms of membership in the church were changed from non-slaveholding according to the General Rule, and the chapter itself, to whatever an Annual Conference in slave territory might determine. In 1816, the General Rule was made to merely prohibit slaveholders from holding office in the church ; and in 1820 the rule which allowed Annual Conferences to legislate upon the subject, was stricken out. It remained just long enough, and I think purposely to fill the church with slaveholders. In 1824, the last four paragraphs of the chapter were added.—*Hist. of Dis.* 4, p. 27.

Thus we have had this chapter modified four times, under the same general rule and restrictive rule that now exist, but now we are warned not to touch it, lest we violate the "constitution."

There was no word of remonstrance from the bench of bishops against the change as unconstitutional. The fathers sir, have been backsliding on this question from the first prohibition.

I conclude by re-affirming what I think I have proved, that the General Rules are both anti-slavery and prohibitory—that therefore all tampering with this chapter for the last forty years, to lower its anti-slavery tone, has been in violation of the General Rule, and unconstitutional ; while the section proposed in the report is in perfect harmony with the General Rule, and perfectly constitutional. Let us adopt it then as it is, and forever prohibit what is admitted on all hands to be sinful slaveholding, from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mr. Disbro said—I have a few words to say, and I may as well take this time as any. A remark was made by Bro. Coombs in relation to a change in this chapter, and he argued against the whole subject from the fact that the report bore such ample testimony in favor of the practice and administration of the Church as it now exists. The argument I would draw from the same premises is, that it ought to be

put into the Discipline as an endorsement of the administration.

Again, does Bro. Coombs mean to say that the General Conference has no right to effect a change in the general rules? His whole treatment of that question is sophistical. The sophistry of that speech was that the General Conference had no power over this question, and that if it had the change desired is not necessary. I appreciate the remarks of Bro. Raymond as to the solemnity of this subject. I am impressed with the remarks of Bonaparte to his soldiers in Egypt:—"Three thousand years are looking down upon us from the summit of those pyramids." He said this in reference to the battle about to be fought. So in this case, the ages of the past are looking down on us—the primitive Church, and the Pauline code, as Dr. Elliott says, and the apostolic fathers, as Dr. Durbin says—all these, with the spirits of our fathers, Wesley, Asbury, and Coke, are looking down on us to understand what is the spirit of Methodism at this time, and what is now the relation of the Church to this great question. I am impressed with this fact. It is an important era in the history of the Church. It is a critical time. It is not a period favorable to the calm, cool deliberation of this great subject. We are organized at this moment in a nation whose whole heart is turning in this direction, whose whole heart is beating with intense interest upon this momentous question.

And it is impossible for a great church circulating as we do through all this nation, not to feel the rocking influence of this mighty agitation operating in all the land. There is danger that we feel this too much, and be moved by impulses, rather than by calm deliberation and cool investigation. If ever there was a question that should be settled with calm, prayerful deliberation, and in full view of all its results, this is one. Now the question is, how far may we safely go in the direction of modifying our Discipline, of carrying out the spirit of our Discipline, and the designs of the fathers of our church? The records show what have been the spirit and practice of the Discipline in relation to the administration on this subject. It is not pretended in any discussions here, that there are no slaves owned by masters who are in good and regular standing in our church. The numbers may be few of those who hold them for im-

proper purposes. It is not contended that all or many of them are mercenary slaveholders, though it cannot be assumed that they are all innocent. Taking it for granted then that there are slaveholders in the church and some of them mercenary, and admitting the great amount of culpable slaveholding may have sloughed off into the southern church, yet it must be admitted that we have slaveholding in the church, and which should be subjected to wholesome church discipline.

Now the question is, how far may we go in tightening the reins and placing the church right before the world? The position of the Methodist Episcopal Church is antagonistic to Slavery, necessarily, and that report assumes that the record should be to correspond with the spirit of the Discipline and administration of the church. We may safely go so far as to vote on this general rule. The church can take this advance step. This report proposes that that be done, that the Annual Conference be recommended to concur in a modification of the general rule, so that all interpretation may be forever silenced. We may go thus far; and may we not take another step—go farther than this and make our whole General Conference record one of a strongly Anti-Slavery character? Some say that a mere resolution on our journal is nothing; but if these records are Anti-Slavery, they will go through this land thrilling with hope to the church. You remember the time when the “colored testimony” resolution was adopted, how it threw a pall over the whole northern church, and disturbed its peace, until the next General Conference expunged it from her journals. Now if this General Conference was to show its abhorrence to Slavery in the adoption of the preamble and its recommendation of the change in the general rule, it would be progress, and the old screw, that has not been turned since 1824, should have another turn, even though slight; it would show progress, and indicate the determination of this General Conference to make progress.

If the Church is not right now, it will, by such action, give promise of becoming so. It is in the power of the General Conference to let this be seen. It is in its power to instruct the Bishops not to carry the work into Slave Territory any farther than we can maintain our anti-Slavery character.

I do not agree with Bro. Mattison, that the Bishops have pre-judged this case. We have the power in this General Conference to dissolve every Conference in slaveholding territory. We can say, that the Arkansas and Missouri Conferences shall be attached to Northern Conferences, and so of Kentucky, Western Virginia, and if we are under a pledge to Baltimore that prevents similar action towards her, we can at least do this towards the others. [Here the speaker was hissed at by Cunningham of the Philadelphia delegation. \* L. C. M.]

We can hem in everything in this direction without a change in the chapter. If there are such objections as some alleged against the change now of the chapter, let the constitution be changed. Let our Bishops be instructed not to go any further South, than they can do and maintain their anti-Slavery character, and the General Conference, four years hence, may carry out what she has begun now.

I do not say the general rule may not be changed now. I do not argue the constitutional question, but there is power to do much that is anti-slavery. It was said by one of the minority, in answer to the question, "Upon what pin would you have hung a minority report, if the prohibitory clause had not been in the chapter, as you suppose?" he did not know, but there would doubtless have been found reasons. Thus, sir, we can do much in the way of progress, as indicated.

The Conference adjourned to 2-1-2 o'clock, P. M.

*Afternoon Session.*—Mr. Smith, of New Hampshire said : I desire to submit a few remarks in support of the resolution now pending before the Conference, and I choose to do so at the present time as it will afford me the opportunity of noticing properly the argument of a friend, Brother Coombe, of Philadelphia, who spoke this morning, and whose speech had not been, as yet, properly answered.

It is proper also for me to say, an able paper drawn up by the Minority of the Committee on Slavery, against the Majority Report, especially that portion of it now pending, is before us. And of the objections it urged against it, the leading and I think we may say, the *chief* one, is its *unconstitutionality*, and it should be considered with that candid and prayerful attention which its gravity demands.

When the Majority Report was first submitted to the Conference I was not able to give to it, as a whole, my full approbation. With the light I then had I was obliged to regard some parts of it as of doubtful propriety, and of doubtful utility. Since that time, however, I have given to the Report a closer scrutiny, and a more thorough investigation, and it has served wholly to remove my objections, and to dissipate my doubts, and to bring my whole heart into sympathy and favor with its principles and measures from beginning to end.

The course I propose for myself is a reply to the following questions, viz ; What are the positions assumed in the preamble of this Report ? and are they well founded ? If so is the resolution now pending legitimately deduced from these positions ?

The first position assumed in the Report is that " the reduction of a moral and responsible being to the condition of property is a violation of natural rights, is considered by most men an axiom in ethics ; but whatever opinion may have obtained in general society the M. E. Church has ever maintained an unmistakable anti-slavery position. The founder of Methodism denounced the system in unqualified terms of condemnation, and the fathers unwaveringly followed the example of the venerable Wesley."

The truth of this position will not, I presume, be questioned for a moment. There is not a member upon this floor—from whatever port of the Church he may hail—who is prepared to record his denial against it. That Slavery is a sin against God and humanity, is not a sentiment which has been proclaimed to day for the first time, from the high places of the Church ; but it is a truth, the proclamation of which has found a record upon the journals of the Church in every period of its past history. As early as 1780, the Methodist Conferences bore noble and memorable testimony against this great evil. During the deliberations of the Conference of that year the question was solemnly propounded : " Does this Conference acknowledge that Slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society ; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours ? Do we pass our disapprobation on all

our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom. Ans, Yes."

This was no vain boast or declamation, but the utterance of an enlightened, sanctified reason, the dictates of an instinctive consciousness of right, the spontaneous prompting of a high, ennobling Christian sympathy, fanned into intense activity by the breath of a deep, pure, and hallowed love of liberty.

We find, then, a perfect agreement between the *first* and *last* utterances of the Church upon this subject.

But we pass to notice the *second* position asserted in this report. It sets forth the claim that the "M. E. Church has in good faith exercised its disciplinary powers to the end that its members might be kept unspotted from criminal connection with the system, and that the evil itself be removed from among men." It moreover sets forth the belief "that the M. E. Church has done more to diffuse anti-slavery sentiments—to mitigate the evils of the system and to abolish the institution from civil society than any other organization, either political, social, or religious; and it is believed that the administrators of discipline in our Church, within the bounds of slave territory, have faithfully done all that under the circumstances they have conscientiously judged to be in their power, *to answer the ends of the Discipline in exterminating that great evil.*"

Thus is our beloved Church nobly vindicated by the report against the unfounded allegations and cruel aspersions with which her enemies have loaded her. She is exalted by it to a proud and worthy position before the eye of the world; and we believe she justly merits it.

And yet, for uttering the same sentiments, in language less emphatic, I regret to be obliged to say, the Episcopal bench has been arraigned under the charge of so far transcending official property as to give the weight of its large influence against the question now before us, by obtruding a *pre-judgment* in the case. In justice to the honorable, high-minded, and venerable men who adorn that bench, I must be allowed to enter my protest against an allegation as unjust and aspersive in character, as it is unfounded in truth. In all honesty, I believe that language more sincere, impartial or truthful, could not have been used than that of the

Episcopal Address upon this subject. I sincerely trust, such an allegation will not be repeated.

I must also, at this point, call attention to the remarks of Bro. Coombe. He made a special effort to take advantage of these open and ingenious concessions of the report, to fasten upon it the charge of grave *inconsistency*. He said : "Here then is the testimony of our northern anti-Slavery friends, intelligent men, men of God, men of piety, men of honesty, who went into the investigation of this subject to come out and tell us that the doctrines of the Church is sound and Scriptural ; and if this is so, in the name of God —of humanity, where is the propriety of changing what is sound and Scriptural ?

The report does not propose to change "what is sound and Scriptural." While it concedes that the *general sentiment* of the Church may be "sound," it alledges that the *letter* of the discipline is not in consonance with that sentiment.

The whole force of the brother's argument goes upon the assumption of the admission of the report, that the letter and spirit of the discipline are in *agreement*. Hence, had he read the very next paragraph in the report following the concessions to which he has referred with such an air of triumph, it would have taken the thunder all out of him. What does it say ? "At this period in our history, we are met with the inquiry, does our Book of Discipline state clearly and definitely our true position and our real sentiments ? Does the letter of the Statute distinctly indicate the practice we propose ? We answer, *no*." Here, then, by the record, we show that the whole ground upon which this argument is based is *falsely assumed*, it crumbles therefore as a worthless thing to the ground. And let it here be remarked, that the distinction made between the "letter of the Statute," and the "sentiment," and "practice" of the Church, is not an unimportant technically, but it is one which is *real* and is *all important* in the settlement of this question.

Neither is it a distinction which finds an application only in a single isolated or unimportant case, but it is one which runs all through the Discipline, and has become essential in its administration. As examples of the distinction here asserted, the report cites first, the obvious fact that "the discipline does not in express terms make the slaveholder inelig-

ible to the Episcopacy. and yet the General Conference of 1844, considered itself justified, both by the spirit of the discipline and the acknowledged practice of the Church, in affirming that the relation of slaveholder was a disqualification for the office of a Bishop, and this it did at the expense of an ever-to-be regretted division of our ecclesiastical organization."

Again, the discipline declares that "when any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives, but the administration assuming that legal emancipation in the case of traveling preachers, universally practicable, does not admit a slaveholder to the itinerant connection."

And in all honor be it said, in no part of the church has this sentiment been more constantly and stringently maintained, than in the Old Baltimore Conference. That venerable body has ever stood forth sublimely, the staunch unyielding defenders and supporters of this sentiment of the church, and there is not a member of this body who would not give to it his fullest approval; yet it must be conceded that this general sentiment goes beyond the letter of the Discipline.

Again, the report asserts, that "our discipline does not distinguish between mercenary slaveholding and the holding of a slave for benevolent purposes, and yet all the arguments found in our official publications, or heard in our Conference debates, by which the admission of slaveholders to church membership is justified, are based upon this distinction, and that for the obvious reason that the distinction itself does really and justly exist in the public mind, and the practice referred to cannot otherwise be justified."

And let me inquire with emphasis, Is not the position here maintained literally and undeniably correct? Is not the distinction here made universally conceded by the church? Most certainly it is, and for what reason? For "the obvious reason that the distinction itself does really and justly exist in the public mind;" and should therefore guide us, both as it regards our theory and our practice. And I confess my pulse beats quicker and my heart felt more warmly, as

I heard this living, operative sentiment of the church, so delicately, accurately, truthfully, yet beautifully presented in this majority report, when presented to the Conference.

And it should be borne in mind that while the report denies that this sentiment of the church in regard to slavery, this spirit of the Discipline, is distinctly expressed by the letter of the general rule, it does assert that it *is* expressed by the most manifest implication. "We hold," says the report, "that the buying, selling—and by inference, the holding of a human being as property, is a sin against God and man." For though the letter of the rule, expresses only the "*buying and selling* of men, women and children"—yet the expression is such, as to fully sanction the belief, that the spirit—the *animus*—of the rule, embraces the intentional *holding* of men, women and children as slaves. Indeed, the idea that the general rule strictly and positively prohibits all "buying or selling" of human beings as property on pain of expulsion, yet allows the "holding" of them as property, is an inconsistency, amounting to little less than a palpable and ridiculous absurdity. This idea finds a strong corroboration, if not a positive demonstration in the origin and history of the general rule. It was born in the Conference of 1784, a few months prior to the Christmas Conference, which organized the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The lion-hearted, godly men of that early Conference had previously pronounced judgment upon slavery *per se*; they also laid disciplinary hand upon the itinerant and local preachers who had become entangled in the meshes of slaveholding, and the discipline was now brought to bear upon slaveholding in the private membership.

The question is propounded, "What shall we do with our friends that will buy and sell slaves?" Mark the form of expression here used. It is not, "that will buy and sell" free persons with an intention of enslaving them, as some would have it; but "that will buy and sell slaves"—that class of human beings who are already reduced to the condition of slaves, who have been from their birth by municipal statutes inhumanly chattelized. The question then touches those members who will have anything to do with the purchase or sale of that class of persons. And what is the answer which that Conference recorded? "If they buy with no other design than to hold them as slaves"—note careful-

ly the phraseology—"with no other design than to hold them as slaves"—not "buy and sell" simply, but it covers the whole ground of buying, selling and holding of slaves as property. "If they buy with no other design than to hold them as slaves and have been previously warned, they shall be expelled and permitted to sell on no consideration." *Emory's Hist. of Dis., page.*

This is a noble sentiment worthy of the men who uttered it. And moreover it contains the very soul of our present general rule—it is indeed the general Rule itself with a different phraseology. It is the general rule in its plain original dress,—nothing more, nothing less. It is doubted? Its subsequent history will it. At the Christmas Conference, which organized our church, the noted rule on slavery was originated, which, because of its impracticable stringency, was in effect abrogated in the course of six months.

In the same minutes following those rules, we have recorded as the 43 question and answer, the following: "What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves or give them away? They are immediately to be expelled unless they buy them on purpose to free them?"—*Emory's History of the Dis. page 44.*

Here the very rule originated by the preceding Conference in all its original stringency and fullness, is brought forward and recorded in the Discipline as the existing and living law of the church.

I know it has been said, it was implied in the remarks of Prof. Mattison this morning, that this 43 question and answer was practically annulled with the rule in the Discipline with which it stood connected by the note of the Bishop. But this a mistake. For in the minutes of 1786, while the rule on Slavery had disappeared, the 43 question and answer were retained; affording the fullest proof that this question and answer were not embraced in the rule annulled by the Bishop's note; but that it was still retained as the existing law of the Church. In 1789, it ceased to appear in the form of a question and answer, but was placed among the general rules of the Church. And though to adjust it to its new condition, its phraseology was a little changed—it is most obvious that all its original spirit—its *animus*, is retained in its particularity and completeness. And it

stands to-day, the recorded declaration and honored law of the church.

If, therefore, our position be correct in relation to the *spirit* and *true intent* of the general rule, we ask not—we desire not to change or modify one iota of its essential spirit, but to change simply its phraseology—its verbiage, so as to express with greater distinctness its *real*—its original import.

And allow me to remark further, that when once this rule had become the embodied sentiment of the Church upon the subject of slavery in the membership—and had taken its place among the general rules—it is but reasonable to suppose that the subsequent statute legislation would be in all essential respects in harmony with its spirit as understood and interpreted. Yet, sir, long ago, under this very rule, we had legislation in the Church, involving to all intents and purposes, the very same principles which are proposed in the second resolution in the Report before us ; but until to-day we have never heard of the cry of *unconstitutionality* or of *inconsistency* with the general rule. Before 1808, the general rules were regarded as possessing all the force of constitutional law, hence the effectual guards which at this time were thrown around them. Yet for twelve years, let me repeat, were the principles of legislation adhered to, which the resolution before us proposes. I refer to the chapter on Slavery enacted in 1796. To the

Quest.—“What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of African Slavery?” It was answered.

“2.—No slaveholder shall be received into society till the preacher who has oversight of the circuit has spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of Slavery.”

To the third answer I now invite your special attention. [Here the hammer fell, indicating the expiration of the thirty minutes allowed to the speaker.]

Dr. Drummond, of Virginia, then addressed the Conference.

Mr. President.—To show what were the views of our fathers on this subject of Slavery, brothers Mattison and Smith have adduced certain portions of the “History of the Discipline.” Brother Mattison quoted from the 43d to 44th pages, from which it appears that, in 1784, rules were made

which required all the members of our Church who held slaves to emancipate them in five years, and which prohibited the admission of slaveholders into the Church, until they would comply with those rules. But these rules, it appears, are followed by a very important provision, which reads thus: "N. B.—These rules are to effect the members of our society no further than as they are consistent with the laws of the States in which they reside." We were emphatically told that in the passages which were read to us, we might hear the voice of the fathers—the voice of Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury. And do we not hear the voice of the same venerated fathers in the extract which I have just read? We do. They tell us plainly that the rules of 1784, which required emancipation, were to "affect the members" of our Church only so far as they were "consistent with the laws of the States." They thus proved their loyalty to the civil government under which they lived. They were not disposed to "repudiate or assault the authority of the State," and I trust their sons will listen to their voice, imitate their example, and tread in their foot-steps. How far the rules requiring emancipation were nullified or rendered inoperative by the restriction just noticed, we need not inquire, but I may ask with propriety, will our brethren, whose report is before us, consent to append to it this provision, which was drawn up by the fathers? We know they will not. And let it be remembered, that the rules requiring emancipation, and which in some places, were doubtless a dead letter from the time they were framed, together with the rule which refused admission to slaveholders, were suspended in six months, and they have never since been revived.

Again, we are told that when the rules requiring emancipation were suspended, a rule against buying and selling slaves was retained in the Discipline, and continued in force until 1789, when the general rule on Slavery took its place. On these points I have no controversy with brother Smith. But I think there are some facts connected with these rules against buying and selling slaves, which are worthy of our special notice. When the rules of 1784 were suspended, the rule against buying and selling slaves, which is found in the form of question and answer, on the 14th page of the history of the Discipline, was the *only rule* left in the Discipline on the subject of Slavery. It continued to be the only rule till

the general rule superceded it, and then the general rule was the only one until the section on Slavery was introduced in 1796. Thus, it appears, that during a period of twelve years, viz : from 1784 to 1796, the only rules known to our Discipline on the subject of Slavery were these two rules against buying and selling, and which were substantially the same. And yet, during all that period, slaveholders were received into the Church by our fathers—by the very men who framed these rules—just as they are now received. Here, then, we have the voice of our fathers speaking to us again—speaking to us by their practice through the first twelve years of the existence of our Church. They received slaveholders just as we do. And did not our fathers who framed the general rule understand the spirit of that rule? Will our brethren of the majority consent to go back to the ground which they occupied during the first twelve years of the existence of our Church, and have no rule on the subject of Slavery but our general rule? Not they, indeed.

The section on Slavery, which was placed in our Discipline in 1796, we are told, is virtually an exposition of our general rule. I am not quite ready yet to admit this. Those who framed that section could not consistently make it require less than is required by the general rule, but they were at liberty so to frame it as to make it require more. They had full authority to go beyond everything expressed or implied in the general rule, and to insert in that section a rule prohibiting entirely and unconditionally the admission of any slaveholder. Had they done this, they would have violated no restriction, for there was then no restriction to violate. That was not a delegated General Conference, as is this body, but it was composed of all the traveling preachers in full connection." But admitting for the sake of the argument, that the section of 1796 is an exposition of the general rule, what does it require touching the admission of slaveholders! Simply this. "No slaveholder shall be received into society till the preacher, who has the oversight of the circuit, has spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery." That is all, sir. True, the next paragraph provides, that when members of the Church bought slaves, the Quarterly Conference should determine at what time such slaves should be set free, but touching the admission of slaveholders into Church, the only thing the section

required was, that the preacher should speak "freely and faithfully" to the applicant, and that being done, he was admitted. Such is the exposition of the general rule, furnished by the fathers in the section on Slavery. Will our brethren who favor the report of the majority be content to receive this construction of the general rule?

Again, it is worthy of special remark, that the General Conference of 1808, which instituted a delegated General Conference, and framed the restrictive rules under which we now act, expunged from the section on slavery both the paragraphs which we have just noticed, and neither of them has had any place in our Discipline since the restrictive rules were made. Even the mild rule which required the preacher to speak "freely and faithfully" to slaveholders before receiving them, was stricken out by the very same Conference from which every delegated General Conference has derived its powers. We are told that the section on Slavery has been altered four times since the adoption of the restrictive rules, and yet there was no cry raised of "unconstitutionality." True, and for the best reason in the world. No one proposed such alterations as would conflict with the general rule, or with the construction given to it by the fathers who made it—a construction which is fixed by the uniform practice of the Church through a long series of years. There were not then so many "fast young men" as there are now—men who can speak of the honest scruples of their brethren touching constitutionality as mere "humbugger," or a "bugbear." The general superintendents of those days were, no doubt, as vigilant as are their successors, and had unconstitutional measures been proposed they would have lifted up their voice against them.

There are measures proposed in the report of the majority which I deem impracticable. I will barely glance at some of them. "No slaveholder shall be eligible to membership in our church hereafter, where emancipation can be effected without injury to the slave." Who is to determine whether or not it is practicable thus to emancipate? Is it the preacher? or is it to be determined by a committee? On this point the report is silent. I suppose the preacher is to be the sole judge, for he is to "enforce" the "rules."—Another part of the report provides for a committee, but that is for *members* who may become slaveholders, not for

applicants for membership. But, whether this matter be determined by the preacher or a committee, the only question is, can "emancipation be effected without injury to the slave?" If it can, it must be done, let the cost or sacrifice be what it may, or the applicant must be rejected. Justice to the master is not to be considered for a moment. If a man lives in the centre of Virginia, and it is practicable at any cost or sacrifice, to take his slave to a free State, and there emancipate him "without injury to the slave," he must do it, or remain ineligible. This, as I understand it, is the construction given to the rule by brother Kingsley, who first proposed it, I believe, in the Pitt. C. Advocate. Again, who is to fix the amount of "compensation" for the services of the slave? and how often is it to be fixed? The compensation is to be "just and equal." A slave may be sick one year, and his services worth little or nothing, and the next year they may be valuable. But, let circumstances change as they may, the preacher must take the oversight of this matter, and he or a committee must see that the slave is paid what is "just and equal." The truth is, the rules proposed in the report are *impracticable*—they *cannot* be carried out. Why then put them in the Discipline when they must of necessity be a dead letter? Why put them there when they can produce nothing but mischief? It is my deliberate opinion, that if any such rules should be adopted, they will bring ruin—*entire ruin* upon all our Churches in the Slave States.

REMARKS OF J. DODGE.—MR. PRESIDENT :—I am thankful for the privilege I this day enjoy. A solemn sense of duty impels me to speak. I stand before you, sir, to plead the cause of three and a half millions of men, women and children, now in bondage : to plead the cause of six millions of the poor whites of the South, who are in a condition little better than the slaves ; and to protest against the tyranny of the three hundred and forty-seven thousand slaveholders of this land over these millions of their fellow men. Hear the word of the Lord, "So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that were done under the sun ; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter ; and on the side of their oppressors there was no power ; but they had no comforter." "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show my people their

transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God ; they ask of me the ordinances of their God ; they ask of me the ordinances of justice ; they take delight in approaching to God. [*Backsliders* are often apparently *very religious*.] Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not ?—Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge ? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and *exact all your labors*. [Brethren imagine there would be great difficulty in determining what would be *just* and *equal*.] Behold ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness ; ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen ? a day for a man to afflict his soul ? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him ! Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord ? Is not this fast that I have chosen, *to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, AND TO LET THE OPPRESSED GO FREE, AND THAT YE BREAK EVERY YOKE ?* [*Is not this constitutional ?* The *Bible* is the *constitution* of our church. Of the rules in our Discipline, Mr. Wesley says, “All these are clearly taught in the word of God, which is the only sufficient rule of our faith and practice ;” and “all these, we believe, the spirit of God writes on truly awakened hearts.” Among these rules is this, “the buying and selling of men, women and children with intention to enslave them.” Surely then the Bible, the Discipline, and the spirit of God agree in condemning Slavery ?] “Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that is cast out to thy house ? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him ; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh ? Then shall thy light break forth in the morning and thy health shall spring forth speedily ; and thy righteousness shall go before thee ; and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. Then shall thou call and the Lord answer ; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, here I am. *If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity : and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul ; then shall thy light rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noon day*” Here we think

we have the letter of the constitution ; behold now its spirit — Isa. 61 : “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, *to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound,*” to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God.” This is not all ; our Divine Saviour presents in few words the sum of all that was written in the law and the prophets. Hear him. “All things therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.”

This word is more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold ! “Sweeter also than the honey or the honey comb.” But we were told in 1840 that to preach this gospel to slaveholders at the South, those preaching it, must hold slaves, or at least approve of holding them. We did not believe it then, neither do we believe it now. The truth is, Slavery must be resisted by the word of God ; and let the consequences to himself be what they may, the man of God must exercise himself with fidelity in this matter. Even though the dark power of Slavery should threaten, like a mighty avalanche, to crush him to a thousand atoms, let him bear up manfully against it, and if he perish, let it be with this exclamation, “*Though a thousand fall let not Slavery triumph !*”

But the question arises, who will go and preach thus in the ears of the oppressors ? You have men already on the ground, sir, who I trust do this. I have had the pleasure of shaking hands with them in the city of Baltimore, and trust, I shall enjoy that pleasure again.—And, sir, if you want others, send me ; but do not send me to preach the divine right of slaveholders to keep their fellow men in bondage, but rather that God requires that they should *let oppressed go free.*”

And here allow me to say, Mr. President, I do not sympathize with those who so deeply deprecate that anything should be said in opposition to the positions assumed by our Bishops in their Episcopal Address. I assume sir, and I believe it is susceptible of proof, that Bishops sometimes greatly err. I have no doubt, sir, but the schism of the church in 1844, is to be attributed in great part to the

course pursued by the former Senior Bishop of this church, namely, Bishop Soule. If he did not lead the way, he certainly went shoulder to shoulder with those who produced that schism.

As one result of that movement, the Methodist Episcopal Church is now doing more in publishing and sustaining pro-slavery literature, than any other body in the land. Unwillingly, involuntarily, it is true. But they are doing it by the hundreds and thousands of dollars they had paid over to the Church, South.

But, sir, what strikes us as very strange is that opposition to this report should come from regions far north of Mason and Dixon's line. That our brethren of Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New York should oppose this measure might indeed appear strange, did we not know the extent and power of the evil with which we contend. There is a power in New York, sir, potent as slavery itself; indeed, though far *whiter*, yet it is clearly identified with it. I allude to the power of *cotton*. This is what presents in that quarter so great a barrier against Freedom, and this it is with which we have to contend.

Mr. Dodge declared himself opposed to all slaveholding without qualification as a sin against God. And he believed that the sentiment of nineteen-twentieths of this body was against holding slaves as property: He asked them to unite in driving that thing out of the Discipline. He begged the opponents of the new chapter not to strike two blows at the abolitionists, for one or perhaps none at Slavery.

Mr. Dodge, during his entire speech, had poured himself out in a perfect torrent of fervid exhortation, after the manner of a camp-meeting exhortation. With suffused face and flashing eye, he closed up his effort by assuring them all, that however they might feel toward him or his speech, he had spoken greatly to his own satisfaction. (Roars of laughter.) He felt well, he added; he was happy and conscious of having discharged his duty to God and the people. (Renewed and boisterous merriment, in the midst of which he passed down from the platform and took his seat. J. A. Collins arose, complimented Bro. Dodge, and assured him of a welcome to the Baltimore Conference.)

Mr. Reddy, of Oneida, Conference, followed:

MR. PRESIDENT:—I can hardly hope to enlighten these,

my superiors, on the question before us. Yet I have a train of thoughts which have not been presented, and which will occupy but a few moments in submitting them. The question at issue is not whether Slavery is an *evil* or not. Our Southern Anti-Slavery brethren, as they have been called, do not attempt to defend it. And the report concedes that they are honest and faithful in opposing it. And we hope, Mr. President, that after the frank, candid and generous concessions of that report, we shall hear no insinuations or imputations about "*ultra* Abolitionism," as applicable to the supporters of it.

It seems to me that the discussion is narrowed down to two points, namely: Has the General Conference a right to incorporate this proposed new chapter into the Discipline? And secondly: Is the proposed substitute demanded? The minority report takes the negative of both these propositions. It denies the authority of the General Conference to adopt this chapter, because it is alleged that it institutes a new condition of membership—I do not think that it does. This denial of the right of the General Conference to adopt this chapter is based on two assumed facts: First, that the Discipline as it is, authorizes and sanctions Slaveholding in the Church; and secondly, that the new chapter makes non-slaveholding a condition of membership. Let us look at these two points:

In the first place, Mr. President, I take the ground that the general rule does not authorize Slaveholding. I shall say nothing about the historical argument respecting the general rule. Let us consider the rule as it is now found in the Discipline.

The rule prohibits Slavery as far as it goes. It speaks of "*buying and selling*," but says nothing of *holding* slaves. Now if this silence authorizes Slaveholding, then the silence of the general rules on the subject of bigamy, theft, counterfeiting or forgery, would authorize those sins. Again: the rule itself is only a specification under a general charge. The general charge or declaration says; that the members of society are to "*do no harm*," to "*avoid evil of every kind*." And the chapter pronounces Slavery a *great evil*." These, taken together, clearly show that the general rule furnishes no authority for Slaveholding.

Let us now, Mr. President, look at the chapter. And

here, it is only by implication and inference, that Slaveholding members can claim their relation to the Church. As far as this chapter goes, it vetoes Slavery. It makes Slaveholding a disqualification for official standing in the Church. It is inferred from this, that *private members* may hold slaves. Would it be legitimate, because the Bible says, a "Bishop must be the husband one wife," to infer that, therefore, a private member may have two? But I will not urge this. It is allowed that this chapter does, by implication, tolerate Slaveholding in private members. Let the chapter be consistent with itself; for, why should it condemn in an official member and preacher, what it tolerates in a private member, since the moral quality of the act is the same in both cases? The chapter calls it a "great evil"—and tolerates it in one case and condemns it in the other!

But now, Mr. President, let us inquire, Does this chapter in the report, make non-slaveholding a test of membership? I think it does not. It especially provides that the merely legal relation shall not work the forfeiture of church fellowship. It clearly assumes that men may sustain such relation innocently.

In this, it is much more explicit than the old chapter.—It is not, therefore, unconstitutional.

Let us then inquire, is it demanded?

We think it is. We need this new chapter because the old chapter does not discriminate between Slaveholders and those who may innocently sustain the legal relation

We need it to bear a living testimony against the moral wrongs of Slavery. The Church is bound to do this, as much as she is bound to testify against drunkenness or adultery, or any other sin.

But it has been said by one of the speakers on the other side—the proposition to change the general rule, implies that the majority of the Committee think they have no authority to adopt the chapter—or they wish it changed that they may do something more than is proposed in the chapter.—(Here Mr. Coombe corrected the speaker.) I answer, we do not seek to change the general rule for the sake of authority, but for symmetry, to make it harmonize with the chapter.

George R. Crooks, of Philadelphia Conf., submitted, that in this discussion we have on one side facts, and on the oth-

er side theories. On the one side abstractions ; on the other constitutional realities. On the one side the vagaries of ultraism, on the other side the matured opinions and experience of the fathers.

He then proceeded to review Mr. Mattison's quotations in the light of other portions of their sayings and doings. He showed that while it was true that the fathers did promulgate theories akin to those now entertained, it was equally true, that, after testing their theories by the stern realities of fact, they found that the widely opening doors that had met them everywhere in the South were closed one after another. And they had wisely receded from their impracticable schemes. They chose to give prominence to the salvation of the souls of men, and make the amelioration of their social condition, a subordinate matter.

To all the constructions by which the Discipline was made to prohibit all slaveholding, Mr. Crooks said—The fathers understood the English language. If they meant that, they would have said that. But they had not said that, and therefore they did not mean that.

Indeed the provisions of 1780 were only approved by the Conference at Baltimore. The Virginia Conference never adopted that minute on Slavery. Besides, during the short time it was recognized the extent of its provisions were to advise merely, and not to enforce "freedom."

A glowing eulogy was passed upon Asbury and the fathers. The intimation that they had backslidden was repudiated with great feeling and some indignation. After various comments upon quotations from Asbury's Journal, Mr. Crooks closed by one of special interest that showed the latest best judgment of Asbury ! It was called for again by Dr. Kennedy. As Mr. Crook's voice) had failed, Dr. McClintock read a quotation closing with the words—*"What is the personal liberty of the African which he may abuse, to the Salvation of his Soul? How may it be compared?"* (Wm. Cooper said with great fervor—"Father forgive these men, they know not what to do !")

Mr. Battelle, of Virginia, next addressed the Conference, and said :

This body is not, as might possibly be inferred from the remarks of a previous speaker, the Congress of the nation, invested with the power to legislate upon, and settle great

questions of a purely civil and national import. For one I am here, a plain Methodist preacher, as a member of this General Conference, to aid, to the extent of my feeble powers, in making rules and regulations, not for the nation, but for the Methodist Episcopal Church. I should much prefer, at the proper time, to give a quiet vote, without otherwise detaining the Conference ; but coming, as I do, from a portion of the Church deeply concerned in the issue of this question, a solemn sense of duty impels me to speak.

I accept the suggestion made by a speaker on the other side, that this discussion need not dwell upon the moral character of the system of Slavery. In reference to that point we all, I trust, heartily subscribe to the standing testimony of the Church. Let that testimony ever remain unimpaired. I would have our people learn it as their fathers have learned it. I have taught it to my children while living ; I wish to leave it as my legacy to them when I die. In the opening of this debate the real question for determination was fairly stated by Mr. Batelle, Are the measures proposed in the Report of the majority of the committee on Slavery right? There was one source only to which we can look for authoritative decisions on all questions relating to the proper tests of membership. And that is the New Testament. Without arguing the point Mr. Batelle assumed further that slaves and slaveholders were both admitted to the Apostolic churches. There is not said he in the New Testament, one verse, line, or word even, that imposes any such obligation or test like that which this new chapter seeks to establish. The New Testament establishes no restriction at all with regard to the admission of Slaveholders into the Christian Church. And no such restriction had ever been established by Wesley, nor the English Wesleyans ; and it is entirely opposed to the fundamental law of the M. E. Church. In answer to this question I am constrained to say that the measures of this report are not right, they practically work a restriction of the commission which Christ gave, and which He alone may change, to "preach the Gospel to every creature." I think it demonstrable that that commission was understood at the first, and has always been understood among us as teaching that Christ should be offered to every sinner ; not to mock him, but to save him, now, whatever may be his condition or relations ; and that if he accepts Christ, and is

accepted of him, now, the Church may also accept him; holding him responsible for all subsequent violations of the law of love. That this commission is not sectional, or even national, simply in its application, but universal, and that it stretches out just so broadly in its tender of spiritual benefits, as to cover our entire race. That if any portion of this sin ruined world can be found for whose inhabitants the Saviour did not bleed, and who are in no danger of eternal death, then, but not till then, may the offer of salvation be withheld.

I am opposed to the measures of this report as practically inaugurating a new and restricted commission for the Church, unauthorized by the only Head of the Church.—They tend virtually to seal up that message, so far as our publication of it is concerned, in reference to sections and Conferences of the Church; even where, as is the fact in my own Conference, the proportion of those in the Church connected with Slavery, is to those who are not, scarcely as one to five hundred. I object further, that this restricted message, if it ever reach the master or slave at all, offers him salvation not now, but some time hence, when certain technical processes are pondered and consummated. It may be a year, or ten years—when, in short, it may be forever too late.

Brethren, ask us, why not take a step in advance? I answer, we are now standing on the only solid foundation. The right to go one step beyond it, implies the right to go any length in any direction. Here is firm ground; “all else is sea besides.” Our people who are not here to-day, have confidence in our abiding by the safe-guards to a precipitate action, which we ourselves have long since pledged to them. This confidence is worth more to you sir, than volumes of rules. The whole Church, and all sections of the Church, irrespective of the pending question, are alike interesting in maintaining it unbroken and unimpaired.

I am opposed to this report, because its measures are not sanctioned by the fundamental law of the Church. I need say but little here, as others more able than myself have considered this point, or will consider it. Two things I think are plain: 1st. The general rule does not in terms prohibit mere slaveholding. 2d. Slaves have been held by members of our Church in every period of her history; and this prac-

tical and long-continued interpretation of the general rule has not been disavowed by the Church as such, in a single instance. I am opposed to the measures of this report as incorporated into the Discipline, by mere statute, and in spite of the general rule, a condition of membership, unknown to either the theory or practice of the Church—with a single brief exception—from the first up to the present time.

I am opposed to the measures of this report as being inexpedient and hurtful. There is no evidence that the church at large desires this action ; while it is apparent that a large portion of our preachers and people in every part of the work, would deplore it—as unauthorized in its action, and as disastrous in its results. And while we are here to-day in the midst of these deliberations, there are thousands of our Israel—loyal to the church of their choice and their love, and painfully solicitous for her future integrity, offering earnest prayer to God for the continued peace of our Zion. I deny further that “the signs of the times” rightly interpreted, are such as call for this action ; but on the contrary, that these very “signs,” if it is proper to consult them at all touching questions of this sort, are such as should restrain it. I earnestly protest against this whole theory that the church is to derive her measures, not of convenience or usage, but of *moral discipline*, from such “signs,” touching this or any other feature of that discipline. It is an old announcement that the Church is the light of the world. The intimation is recent at least in our councils—that the world is the light of the Church. I humbly submit that “the old is better.” Will the measures of that report tend to “extirpate” slavery ? Not if they prove to be utterly impracticable ; and that they will so prove is the testimony of those who speak from personal acquaintance with the facts of the case. If a disease were to appear in this city, would not the physicians *here* be at least as well prepared to prescribe for that disease, as those of the same school in a distant place ? We gather our knowledge of Slavery from personal observation of its workings, in the land where our labors our prayers, and tears have been expended ; and while we are not here to defend or sanction the system, ought not our testimony to be respected, when we tell those who possibly from their far off position never saw a slave, that whatever this report may do in extirpating the Church, it cannot free

a single bondman? Our thought has been, that while the slavery of the body is an evil, the slavery of the soul to sin, is an infinitely greater evil, and that the peril for both worlds, to multitudes for whom Christ died, from this latter bondage, was the most imminent and pressing; and that when from circumstances which we did not create, and which are beyond our control, we cannot secure the change of civil relation. We are nevertheless doing a great work in being instrumental in the spiritual freedom, and ultimately through this, securing every other valuable interest. In attempting more, shall we peril all? And when all is periled and we sink under the burden, will our brethren who now seek to impose it, come to our relief and help us to bear it? Shall we lay aside this plan that is attested by a great cloud of witnesses, on earth and in heaven, as having the power of saving the soul, and not unfrequently working the legal emancipation of the body? Shall we in lieu of it send to the poor bondsmen, from afar, rules and regulations? Shall we help him in his lot by eloquent speeches which he will never read or see? Shall we say to him, "Be ye warmed and filled" with distant sentiment and intangible sympathy? I am free to say that as one deeply "convinced of the evil of slavery" I am opposed to this report as tending not to the "extirpation" of that evil, but directly to strengthen and establish it.

If it be the purpose of this report to act upon public sentiment in other portions of the country, I protest that the medicine is tendered in the wrong direction. Even the report itself indorses the healthy condition of our people. We are not sick; if others are, let them and not us, take the remedy. We are content with the discipline as it is, and with the Church as it is. And especially are we unwilling by a change such as this report contemplates, to concede that that Discipline and Church have been up to this time, as falsely charged by our enemies, pro-slavery; an aspersion only equal led in its injurious effects by another, to be cast upon the Church by other enemies, should this report pass, that she is given over to an impracticable ultraism. Let others pine for a purer Church; we are content with the Church with which Asbury, Roberts, Hedding, Fisk and their fellow laborers and fellow sufferers were content. In the same old ship we are willing to sail. Confident that as

she bore them safely over the flood, she will, unless we wantonly destroy her, bear us onward to meet them.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

*May 24—Morning Session.*—The proceedings to day were not of a character to interest the reader. Several reports were presented to be acted on hereafter, and are therefore omitted, except to name them.

J. A. Collins offered a resolution that when Conference adjourn, it do so to meet at 2 o'clock, P. M., Monday.—Carried.

Rev. D. W. Bristol presented the credentials of D. A. Wheeden, in place of E. Bowen, of Oneida.

Mr. Phelps moved that the Slavery report be taken up now.

Dr. Osbon moved to amend by substituting Tuesday morning for now. Amendment laid on the table.

Moved that the motion of Bro. Phelps be laid on the table. Carried.

Mr Brooks presented a memorial on Boundaries. Dr. Kenneday a report from the committee on Episcopacy. Mr. Pilcher, a resolution on Revision :

On motion of Mr. Collins, of Michigan, the memorial of Reeder Smith was referred to a committee of five.

Dr. Perry presented a memorial from J. M. Snow.

Dr. Peck presented reports from the Book Committee, which were adopted.

No. 5. The committee have had under consideration the memorial of Sheldon Clarke, praying that local preachers among us have the same discount allowed them by our book agents on books and periodicals, as are allowed traveling preachers. Committee purpose the following :

*Resolved*, That our Book agents be authorized to furnish our local preachers with books and periodicals, for their own use at the same discount allowed traveling preachers when the money accompanies the order .

GEORGE PECK, *Chairman*.

No. 7. The committee also recommended the adoption of the following resolutions :

*Resolved*, That in the judgment of this General Conference it is not proper for the editors of the periodicals to leave their work for any considerable time, and devolve

their official duties upon others, without the consent of the Book Committee, or of their respective Publishing Committees.

*Resolved*, That we deem it the duty of the editors of our Church periodicals to maintain the interests and usages of our Church, and not to permit intemperate assaults upon them in their columns.

The committee have had under consideration certain papers from Rev. George Coles, have examined them and find that they contain proposals for publishing a "Cheap Commentary on the Bible," "Questions on the Book of Proverbs," and a "Revised Concordance." They recommend that the proposal for the publication of a cheap commentary be referred to the committee on that subject ordered by the General Conference, and that Bro. Coles be recommended to submit the other papers referred to, to the Editors at New York.

GEORGE PECK, *Chairman*.

Mr. Porter, of New England, presented the report from the committee on the Court of Trials and Appeals. Laid over.

Mr. Collins moved that that part of the Discipline on colored preachers, under the head of chapter on Slavery, be taken out and placed more appropriately in some other locality. Referred.

Mr. Hamilton called up that part of the report from the committee on Missions which relates to the appointment of a Bishop for Africa.

Mr. Bangs remarked that he was averse to the report—he was averse to both resolutions, and he was particularly averse to disturbing the restrictions of the Discipline. After some remarks he closed by offering the following substitute:

*Whereas*, The Liberia Annual Conference has felt the necessity of Episcopal services, beyond the ability of our Bishops residing in this country to render. And whereas, it is the desire of this General Conference to promote the work of God in that, as well as other countries, in such way and by such means as may appear to be the best adapted to the circumstances of the people. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That the Liberia Annual Conference is at liberty to form themselves into a separate church establishment.

*Resolved*, That we do hereby recommend to our brethren in Africa, to adopt the form of government of the M. E.

Church in the United States, with only such modifications as their circumstances may require.

*Resolved*, That should the Liberia Annual Conference avail themselves of the foregoing provisions, and elect an Elder to the superintendency of the church there—desiring his ordination by our Bishops—we do hereby authorize and request the Bishops, or any of them to whom such elect may be presented, to ordain him.

*Resolved*, That in case the church in Africa become separated from us, it does not follow that we will cease to cherish and assist them in carrying on the work of God in that country, but on the contrary, we do hereby recommend to the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the M. E. Church in New York, to continue their fostering care, and make such appropriations for the work there, from time to time, as they may judge to be necessary. Provided, the doctrines and moral discipline of the M. E. Church be faithfully preserved among them.

H. BANGS,  
JAS. PORTER.

Dr. Durbin said he would explain the true meaning of the action of the Conference. He had listened attentively to the reading of the substitute, and he saw no difference between it and the report of the committee, with the exception of one unfortunate point; it sets off Africa and makes the Liberia Conference a distinct and separate organization removed from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, while the report proposes to retain that jurisdiction and exercise over it a general supervision.

Mr. Collins looked with great interest to this mission, and believed it ought to be under the jurisdiction of the General Conference. In regard to the election of a Bishop he believed the members of the Liberia Conference would find great difficulty in electing a Bishop from among themselves. He was in favor of the report.

Mr. Reddy rose and asked that Bishop Scott might be respectfully requested to address the Conference on this subject.

Bishop Scott said, among the most pleasing reminiscences of his life were those connected with his visit to Africa.

In going there, he consciously took his life in his hand, and realized a perfect willingness in the prosecution of that

mission. In the providence of God his life was preserved during his journey, and he was permitted to return to his native land. Though he had been indisposed since his return, he could not attribute it to the climate of Africa. He had been health while on the coast than he had previously enjoyed, but prior to his leaving, he was rather prostrated and the tedious and uncomfortable voyage kept him indisposed. In regard to the question now before the Conference, the Bishop said he had taken some pains to ascertain the views of the brethren in Africa. He thought a majority of the brethren would prefer the substitute. They would prefer to be allowed to erect themselves into an independent Church, provided it would be done without periling the Missionary appropriations, and provided the elected Bishop would be allowed to appear before the Board of Superintendents and receive ordination. This, however, said the Bishop, is not the universal feeling. Some of the best minds in Africa are opposed to it—they doubt whether they could manage their affairs if left alone, and they desire the supervision of the M. E. Church still continued. Among the number entertaining this opinion is Francis Burns, the strongest man on that coast. He has some considerable feeling on the question, and he feared, from certain intimations, there was a disposition to set them off. He took strong exceptions to some statements in my report on that subject, and in a letter, thoroughly canvassed my views, and answered my arguments in relation to the separate ecclesiastical existence as well as political. It was the Bishops opinion that if the brethren in Africa had to operate only with persons of their own color, they might succeed, but as there are influences growing out of other organizations, it would place them on disadvantageous ground. It was a fact that the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Africa, is a white man; besides, other organizations had white superintendents. There was also the admitted fact that there is a degree of deference shown to white men that is not, and cannot be shown to colored men, at least in the present state of affairs. His deliberate judgment was that they should have a white Superintendent. If some brother possessing the requisite qualifications would offer himself for Africa it would be desirable, but if such a one cannot be found, then the proposed measures would answer.

Dr. Perry remarked that when the measure was introduced he had a decided objection to it—his sentiments varied with the speakers. But he was opposed to the measure four years ago, when the subject was under discussion in the General Conference. He felt his heart deeply and intensely interested in the progress of the work in that country. He had investigated the subject with the deepest interest, and the result of his investigation was the conviction that they must have a white man for Africa. This was obvious from various considerations. One of these was the *prestige* connected with the white race in Liberia, and the more intimate connection with our church here. Whatever connexion may subsist between the church in Africa and the church here, and however clearly organized, one thing is certain, that if a colored man be Bishop, there is a virtual separation. The Dr. said he had lamented deeply, for years, the inefficiency of our mission in Africa. We had spent large sums of money in sustaining it. Had sacrificed the most valuable and useful lives, in the building up of the church; but notwithstanding all, but little, comparatively, had been accomplished.

For the purpose of obtaining information on one point of the report, the Dr. asked for its reading.

After the reading, Dr. Durbin explained that the Liberia Conference might elect a white man from this country.

Dr. P. resumed. He was convinced that the church ought to make Episcopal visitations to Africa frequently for jurisdiction and counsel, and he was equally well satisfied that the church had not done what she might have done.—He referred here more particularly to the establishment of missions in the interior. Our Missionary Society, he said, had heretofore been an adjunct of the Colonization Society. He called attention to what other churches had done and were doing in Africa. There are, said he, in Africa, 93 missionaries; 80 to 100 assistants; 75 to 80 native assistants; 9,850 communicants, and 150 schools of all denominations. This did not include the missions of South Africa, and the Eastern Coast. The London mission began in 1804. has 14 missionaries, white men, and many lay assistants.—They occupy the most unhealthy part of the coast. This English mission is doing great good for Africa through the agency of white men, at Leone, Gambia, and at Cape Coast South, in a more dangerous locality than that occupied by

our mission. There was also the missionary society of Basle, having seven missionaries, with native assistants, and we hear nothing said of the danger attendant upon their labors. There were also the Hamburg establishment, on the coast, the missions of the American Board on the Gaboon river, that of Glasgow with its seven white missionaries, the American Baptist Union, the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian church at Monrovia and Settro Kroo, the Board of the Protestant Episcopal Church at Harpers, with its five stations and schools, and its white Bishop. He remarked that we had begun our work in 1832. At first a few noble spirits entered into the work, but we have heard all along in its progress, the craven cry of fear. He believed there was less danger to be apprehended from the climate than in Georgia. He added that there was the S. B. Convention with its ten stations in Liberia and its schools. Some would recollect, said the Dr., that I counted the cost of going to Africa, and had agreed to go, but having learned that I would be limited in my field to a small strip on the coast, I desisted. I wanted to penetrate Africa, and knew that there were multitudes of souls in regions of health, where the miasma of the coast did not extend, and that among the numerous tribes, God would open up a way. He concluded by asking, what has the black man done in Africa for the church? If a white man goes out as a Bishop, there is hope, if he go with all the honors of the Episcopacy, that he will be respected, and his agency will accomplish the greatest good to Africa.

Dr. Floy remarked that he did not yield to any man on that floor in his regard for Africa. He had watched over the African mission almost from the beginning. He had the honor of being one of the managers of the Parent Missionary Board, where the subject of Liberia and its mission from time to time had been considered. He would say that for several years past the Board had been driven to the conclusion, that it was fighting against Providence to send white men to the eastern coast of Africa. When a female in his charge impressed with a sense of duty to go to Africa, and filled with a missionary spirit volunteered her services, the corresponding Secretary felt it his duty to dissuade her from the attempt on account of the deadly nature of the climate. He asked if it was likely because a white man was

made a Bishop he would stand a greater chance to live than if the same man went there without ordination. He had come to the deliberate conclusion that the climate of Africa was deadly to the white man. Colored men must do the work in Africa if it be done at all. The resolution looks to the election of a white man or colored man. Leaving the men out of the case so far as color is concerned, suppose said the Doctor, the requisite majority is obtained and the constitutional vote given, and suppose that in Africa they elect a colored man? I repeat it where is he amenable? The corresponding Secretary told us he was amenable to the Liberia Annual Conference, but he never heard that a Bishop was amenable to an Annual Conference over which he presides.

Dr. Durbin replied that he would be responsible there as a Bishop is here.

Dr. F. resumed. We have, said he, a Conference in Liberia, composed of twenty Elders. We send to these twenty men the right to elect a Bishop, and for what purpose? What is the object? A Presiding Elder can preside as he has done over the Conference, and is competent for every function except conferring orders; and on an average, not more than one man a year, is a candidate for ordination; for the simple purpose then, of electing a Bishop, we introduce the strange and unheard of anomaly into the Discipline referred to. If one of our Bishops cannot go to Africa once in four years, let the candidates for ordination come here, and if that cannot be done, let them meet half way in mid ocean.

Suppose this measure obtained, and some shrewd man succeeds in getting eleven votes. Human nature is the same there as here. Suppose, said the Dr. he goes as far as a Bishop here did, and connects himself with slavery—buys up some of the captive tribes

“ To fan him when he sleeps  
And tremble when he wakes.”

Suppose all this, and suppose dressed in his little brief authority, he assumes an archepiscopal name and functions, and puts on pontifical robes, and assumes pontifical authority; suppose for some crime or malfeasance in office he is brought to trial, and his holiness or highness is before the

Bar of the Church. His peers readily believe he is guilty, and suspend him if he is not shrewd or cunning enough to prevent the ends of justice through the influence of Elders, who depend upon him for their appointment. At length he comes here for trial, and brings ten of the Elders as witnesses and parties in his behalf, and the other side in behalf of the Church bring the other ten: what a spectacle we shall have?

Amid all this imposing array, there is another question, who will foot the bill? The Missionary Society, of course. Now, the fact is, the people are looking at our Missionary Treasury with a jealous eye, and murmurings are heard that too much already is spent for Africa, and they ought to begin to help themselves, at least, to some extent.

Suppose further, that this Bishop, after six month, loses his health, to whom shall he look for support? His health gone, he comes home. Who will take care of him and his wife and children? Who will estimate his salary? Has the Liberia Conference the authority to fix his salary, and to fix it for life? The more, said the Doctor, I consider these questions the more I am convinced that the time has not yet come to set off the Liberia Mission.

He trusted Liberia would be left to the prayers of God's people, and if a white man was prepared to throw himself into the breach, with his hand and his heart he would give him aid. But let such go without ordination. The imposition of hands setting him apart to the Episcopacy will not increase his usefulness or add to his ability to labor for the salvation of his fellow men.

And he did hope that no one would be influenced by the desire to be a bishop, and subject himself to the suspicion that your zeal for Africa is only because you may be a bishop if you will go there.

Mr. Wilson remarked that he thought the whole procedure premature. He thought it would be ridiculous to elect a Bishop for twenty elders and twelve hundred members. He could see no necessity whatever for the movement, and the whole matter was encompassed with insurmountable difficulties. He therefore would move an indefinite postponement.

It being suggested that there was not a quorum present,

the roll was called. 163 answered to their names—a quorum.

The question of postponement was taken, and on a count vote it was again ascertained that was not a quorum voting.

A motion to adjourn was lost.

Mr. Porter, of New England, presented a petition from Boston on the subject of Slavery, but there not being quorum it was pronounced out of order.

Does the Bishop pronounce it out of order to present a memorial on Slavery.

Bishop Waugh. Nothing is in order but a motion to adjourn, as there is not a quorum.

Calvin Kingsly, then is it in the power of a few to vitiate the action of the Conference, by withholding their votes.

N. L. Harris, the majority can be defeated by the minority on every question by that decision.

Bishop Waugh, I give you notice that while I am in the chair there can be no business done without a quorum is present and voting.

J. Porter deemed the decision of the chair incorrect, that a quorum was not present because a quorum did not vote, and that there could be no business done but adjourn. He took an appeal.

M. Raymond submitted a query to the Bishop, to this effect. Do you decide that no business can be done but adjourn, when on a count vote a quorum does not act—or, merely that the action on a specific question is not valid if a quorum fails to vote?

Bishop Waugh, the latter is my decision.

In this the appeal was withdrawn. (Note—The Bishop slighted his ground. He peremptorily declared that the presentation of a memorial even was not in order, because nothing was in order but to adjourn—Reporter.)

The Conference then adjourned.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference assembled at 2 o'clock. Bishop Morris in the chair. The religious exercises were conducted by Mr. Haney. The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Phelps moved that the order of the day be suspended

for the purpose of taking up the report of the committee on slavery. Carried, and the report was taken up.

W. C. Hoyt said:—It is with no little embarrassment that I rise to speak on this subject. This may rise from a variety of considerations, among which may be named the greatness and importance of the subject, but especially my comparative youthfulness, and the fact that I am to speak in the presence of venerable, grey-headed, learned, and experienced men; and further, because the views I entertain differ somewhat from the views of some, at whose feet I would sit and learn. (Mr. Hoyt then referred to his conversion, under the labors of a minister of our church, now in Heaven, and to the fact that he was led thereby to the study of the Discipline, and also to the fact that by his connection with the ministry he was led to the close and careful study of the Discipline, that he found it to be as he supposed, strongly anti-slavery, and continued.) I knew nothing of the modern views which have prevailed. I supposed, in my simplicity, that the rule on Slavery was designed to prohibit the buying and selling and holding slaves. The construction put upon it now is of a recent date. Reading on through the book, I came to the last chapter and found this question, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the great evil of slavery?" In my simplicity, I supposed I was brought into a Church hostile to Slavery, hostile to the buying, selling, and holding men, women, and children as slaves. The time came, sir, when you laid your hands upon my head, and said, giving me the Scriptures, "receive the Holy Scriptures, and take authority to preach the same."

Turning over these Scriptures, I could not understand them to teach any such doctrines as the right of property in man. Yet, I supposed, that though there might be some circumstances under which persons might sustain the relation without criminality, yet I believe the genius of Christianity and the Discipline of our Church were utterly opposed to Slavery.

An incident occurred in my early relation to the ministry, which confirmed these convictions. The subject came up before the New York Conference, and Bro. Collins, of the Baltimore Conference, was there, and was invited to express himself upon it, and to state the usage of Baltimore. He was warm and eloquent in his discourse, and stated that there

was no slaveholder in the Baltimore Conference, nor could any local preacher be ordained who was a slaveholder; that they looked to the removal of the great evil of Slavery. So I have gone on imbibing anti-Slavery sentiments. I have obtained them from our authors and our experienced men. I claim to be sound in the faith. To show this, I call your attention to an able article, which was published in the New York Times, the Christian Advocate and Journal, and others. (Mr. Hoyt read the extract as follows, remarking that it was from Dr. Durbin, showing what the church should do:)

1. She should recognize marriage between slaves, or where a slave is a party, as existing by the laws of God, and indissoluble by any act of man or of the State, contrary to the ordinances of God in relation thereto. Upon this she should found her discipline in the case, and hold every member of the Church responsible, under suitable penalties, who should willingly and without actual compulsion by the State, do any act, or cause, or allow any act to be done knowingly or willingly, by which the husband and wife should be separated; or who should unreasonably, under the conditions of the case, restrain or embarrass the lawful enjoyment and duties of husband and wife, where one or both were in bondage.

2. In like manner the church should recognize the relation of parents and children, and should subject to discipline any member of the church who should willingly, and without absolute compulsion by the State do any act, or cause or allow any act to be done knowingly or willingly by which infant children should be separated from their parent or parents.

3. Although the State discharges the master from the duty of instructing his dependent slave in the principles and duties of the Christian religion, the Church cannot discharge him; and as his relation as master puts him, to a very great extent, into the place of *parent* to his dependent slaves, the Church should require his master to instruct his slaves, or cause them to be instructed in religion, in as perfect a manner, and to as great an extent as is practicable, under the conditions of the case. For a neglect of this duty, the Church has a right to prescribe and execute suitable penalties.

4. As the authority of the master takes away, to a very great extent, the voluntary action of the slave in providing for his wants and those of his children, the Church is compe-

tent to inquire, whether the master makes reasonable provision for the wants of his slaves, who are dependent upon him, and to prescribe suitable penalties for neglect in this respect.

5. In case of any sale or purchase of a slave by a member of the Church, the transaction should be inquired into by the authorities of the Church; and if it shall be found not to have been to the advantage of the slave, or that his condition has been made worse, it should be held to be a proper subject of discipline, and treated accordingly.

I have indicated five particulars which should enter into the discipline of the Church with regard to Slavery within her bosom.

The justice of the views and of the discipline which I have given above, I believe would be admitted as cordially among us in the South, as it ought to be admitted in the North.

This article is from the Secretary of the Missionary Society, a man who, in my earlier days, fired my soul with zeal, to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ. One sermon which I heard is as fresh as though heard no more than an hour ago. Under these circumstances, imbibing these sentiments, I came to entertain the convictions, which are contained in the report.

You will perceive what I have said, and the extracts which I have read, that I conceive that the extracts I have given, and the remarks I have made, go to coincide with views of the majority of the committee. I will not say that they go to sustain every part of that report, and yet a careful comparison of the two will show that on any other subject that committee would be liable to the charge of plagiarism.

This leads me to oppose the minority report, and I do oppose it by the extracts which I have read. I put against that report the uttered sentiments of Dr. Durbin, which I hold in my hands.

But again, the question in the seventh chapter on Slavery is powerfully anti-slavery, but the answers are not fully in keeping. We ask what shall be done for the extirpation of the great evil of Slavery? And you will find that since 1796 to 1824 every alteration made in the Discipline has been made in favor of Slavery. And the answers now in the chapter are inconsistent with the question. (Mr. Hoyt read from the chapter in illustration of this statement.)

In 1834 and '35, the enormities of Slavery began to be discussed, and in the General Conference of 1836 the Pastoral address held this language to the question, in answer:

"From every view of the subject which we have been able to take, and from the most calm and dispassionate survey of the whole ground, we have come to the solemn conviction, that the only safe, scriptural and prudent way for us, both as ministers and people, to take, is wholly to refrain from this agitating subject."—Bangs' Hist., vol 4 p. 20.

We pass on to 1840. The country was agitated North and South, among men, women and children. The subject is discussed, the whole Church is excited on the question, but the Discipline remains the same in its questions and answers. Another answer to that question is made in the report of a committee of which Dr. Bascom was chairman, which was adopted by the General Conference of 1840.

*Resolved*, By the Delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference, That under the provisional exception of the general rule of the Church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in States or territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers, of the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and cannot, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination!

That Conference gave another answer. It is found in the colored testimony resolution as follows:

*Resolved*, That it is inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher to permit colored persons to give testimony against white persons, in any State where they are denied that privilege in trials of law.

It is said the action proposed in the report is in conflict with the Constitution. If it is so, and if the members of this Conference are anti-slavery, does it not devolve on us as true, honest, faithful anti-slavery men, to change that rule, so that this proposed amendment may become constitutional? I speak for myself, and do not in this speak for others. I say, if I am opposed to Slavery, if I feel it to be an outrage upon the laws of God and the rights of man, I must give my vote to change that rule. I do not speak for others, but

I say for myself I must go for changing the rule, so that it may become constitutional to insert the provisions of this report.

I. Chamberlayne.—Slavery never regenerates itself.—This shows its inherent turpitude. Its tendency is to self-propagation. At first it was diffident, seeking and thankfully accepting existence under the notion of 'owing service.' It was long contented with mere passivity. It craved protection as a local institution. Conscious that it was abhorrent to humanity, it implored respite only till it could say its prayers and die with decency. Quitting, however, the passive character, it ere long began to put on its airs, and has ever since been turning up its nose at the honesty which refuses to eat the bread which oppression wrings from unrequited labor. Quitting, I say, the passive character, it has successively added Tennessee to Kentucky, Louisiana to Mississippi, Texas to Florida, and Arkansas and Alabama to Missouri. In these strides of her power, she has lavished millions of the people's treasure. She has poured out the blood of our citizens like water. She has wrested wide realms from weak neighboring nations. She has laid her hand on nearly all the high offices in the gift of the people. She has filled her prisons with the free and unoffending citizens of the North. She has forced the authorized agents of free State government, when sent to her courts of justice to seek redress for our incarcerated citizens; she has forced them by threatened indignities and death from lawless violence to fly from her borders. Taking an unprincipled advantage of still more unprincipled northern Presidents and Legislators, she has procured an enactment which not only turns out free commonwealths into hunting ground for her fugitives, but, beside ignoring the habeas corpus and the right of trial by jury, and offering a bribe to her judicial agents for every wretch remanded to her custody, she requires us, you, sir, and all of us, to substitute ourselves for the negro dogs she chooses to leave at home. Yes, sir, requires us to catch her fugitives and hold them, and then, if need be, to help chain them, and consign them to some United States vessel employed to deliver them over to their lordly masters and *ours*, who despise such servility as intensely as those who are capable of it would despise themselves, were not the last spark of manhood dead within them.

And, by tampering with soulless northern demagogues, she has, now recently, legalized a prostitution to Slavery of a territory sufficient in extent and in the richness of its resources for an Empire.

The people of this territory, who love our free institutions, and who have left their eastern homes with aspirations worthy of the fathers who fought and fell, and the mothers whose pewter plates and flannel garments supplied bullets and cartridges for the strife at Bunker Hill and Lexington—these people are at this moment, as, indeed, they have been for many months, at the mercy of that dark power whose gentle suaves are tar and feathers, and hemp, and horse-ponds, enforced by artillery, to say nothing of the rhetoric of bowie knives and revolvers.

Sir, is it a mere *brutum fulmen* of the slave propagandists, that Slavery is yet to be nationalized? Are you quite certain that there was no seriousness in the boast by a United States Senator, that the roll call of his slaves should be uttered from the monument of our Bunker Hill?

What, then, I demand, is the import of certain judicial decisions, followed within the last few days, by the decision of a majority of the supreme judges of the nation?

True to her instincts, and hot with the lust of empire, she vociferates—

“No pent up Utica confines our powers,  
The vast, th’ unbounded continent is ours.”

Really, sir, it would seem as if we were in a fair way of learning to

“Not blame [her] for taking *some*,  
But thank for leaving *ANY*.”

With her foot already on the neck, and her stiletto buried to the hilt in the bosom of free Kansas, it only remains that she should settle the measures by which the foreign slave traffic is to be re-opened, and by which, after the reduction of Mexico, and Central America, and Cuba, the necks of the slavery-hating North are to be brought to her imperious feet.

Such, as a State institution—peculiar in more respects than a few—such was slavery, the bantling; such are its present over-shadowing proportions; such its aspirations; such its prospects.

I have said, sir, that slavery can never regenerate itself. Its native tendencies are all in the opposite direction. The truth of this assumption has appeared in our rapid survey of its general history.

But of Slavery in the Church: for, unhappily, Slavery in the Church has its history also. Not Abrahamic and Jewish slavery; but, as is pleaded, Gospel slavery. Not post-apostolic, but co-apostolic. Not patristic nor mediæval, nor papal; but Wesleyan—Wesleyanly Methodistic—Episcopally Methodistic Slavery.

You must have noticed, sir, that our contestants for apostolic Slavery apologize for it on the ground that, being underlaid with the principles of equity and love, it was expected that those principles would soon obliterate it, by obliterating the distinction between the master and the slave; and that, until that result was reached, the former as well as the latter was admitted to the Church, that its meliorating associations, by making the master a better man, might prepare a better master for the slave.

Supposing so much of this assumption to be true, as regards the idea that the principles of the gospel were expected by the Apostles to operate the gradual, if not the speedy extirpation of Slavery, I shall only express our common regret that, according to these annalists of Slavery in the Church, the Apostles' expectation has never yet been realized. Not quite.

But Methodism is now its antagonist. Methodism, which is not particularly displeased by being considered the purest, most just, most benevolent, and the mightiest of all post apostolic organization—this is the power by which Slavery was grappled 76 years ago.

Moved by the utter abhorrence of slaveholding, so freely uttered by their Founder, the first Methodist preachers went straight to the conscience of the oppressor, with, "Thus saith the Lord, let my people go."

Slavery—I speak of it as then existing in our societies—Slavery, having some conscience then, and writhing and alarmed by the energetic utterances of these men of God, half relaxed her grasp upon her victims, and only pleaded that time might be allowed her to consummate her repentant purposes, by preparing the exodus of her sable captives.

In her next phase, she appears to have half repented of

her partial repentance, and repulses the messengers of emancipation with—"Why do ye," fanatical intermeddlers, "let the people from their work?"

Till at length, waxing bold in her impiety, and emulating the audacity of her Egyptian prototype, she puts down her queenly foot as a final period to all negotiation on the subject, by virtually saying, "I know not the Lord; neither will I let the people go."

Then it was that the voice which pealed upon the ear of Freeborn Garretson—the voice which cried, "Let the oppressed go free!"—the voice which pursued him, till his last vassal was emancipated—then it was, I say, that voice began to die away upon the ear of the Methodist Slaveholding conscience.

True, we have been saying our catechism on the "extirpation" of slavery from that day to this; and it must be admitted, that some of us who were at a safe distance, have not only said it according to the book, but have, now and then, edified each other and eased ourselves of some pent-up indignation, by improvising some hard epithets which were not in the book.

But what answer can we give, as to what else we have done? Shall we point to the existing separation between us and a half million of slaveholding Methodists in the South? To this candor demands we should admit that it came without our choice, and that it was submitted to as great a calamity, and with many a fraternal pang.

And it must be further admitted, that while the Southern secession has expunged the chapter on slavery, and declared that the general rule is innocent of any hostility to such common slavery practices as do not involve the out-lawed African slave trade, and while buying, selling and holding human beings as chattels is perfectly free, as well to every grade of her ministry, (including Bishops,) as to her private members—it must be further admitted, I say, that while this is the cause, there is not wanting, on both sides of the line, a co-fraternal feeling, not only inducing the interchange of kindly social offices—an object greatly to be desired—but also of mutual recognition in acts of public worship; in sacraments and ordinances; at the altar and in the pulpit; by our laymen and by our ministers.

That we can claim no merit for the sloughing off the South-

ern slaveryism, other than inflexibly maintaining the inexpediency—not the sin, but the mere inexpediency of Episcopal complicity with it, is further obvious from the fact, not that our Methodism, with John Wesley's ideas of it, and the ideas of our cis-Atlantic fathers, has been carried into slave territory, and established and extended there ; but from the fact that it is there, as much a slaveholding Methodism, so far as private membership is concerned, as the M. E. Church South.

And it is obvious from the further fact, that it is not only there, as a receptacle for those who live on compelled and unrequited labor, in violation of natural justice and the word of God ; but that it is in course of extension, by building churches, organizing circuits, and districts, and conferences, and missions, and that moneys collected for the general missionary purposes, are appropriated, in part, for this purpose—the maintenance and extension of a status which invites to our communion those who hold in cattlehood their own blood—their own brethren.

These references to Slavery, its developements and operations in our country and in our church, will at least, suffice to show that Slavery, because it is intrinsically evil can never exhibit, and never has exhibited, any tendency to self-correction—self-extirpation.

On the contrary, as the above references show, the whole history of Slavery, whether in church or State, presents it as the antagonist to all that is sacred in natural justice, and the inalienable rights of man ; to all that is sacred in the relations of husband and wife, parents and children ; to all that is distinctive in ethical christianity and Methodism, from “the most execrable villain that ever saw the sun.”

And it not only exhibits these points of antagonism to natural justice, and human rights, and preceptive christianity ; but, in the nature of things, as well as in point of fact, it has been, is, and even must be, actively aggressive upon all these interests.

So that, the question now forced upon us, as to what shall be done—not what shall be *said*, merely, but as to what shall be done—for the extirpation of Slavery, is a question which appears directly to the instincts of self-preservation.

For he must be a dull interpreter of history and the signs of the times who does not see, that if freedom does not ex-

extirpate Slavery, Slavery will extirpate freedom ; that if Methodism does not extirpate it, it will extirpate Methodism ; and finally, that if we do not extirpate Slavery, Slavery will extirpate us.

Sir, we are admonished to "*let well enough alone*." But we must decline this advice, because, for the life of us, we cannot agree that slave-holding, especially the everlasting influx of it into the church, is quite well enough.

And, sir, we are further advised by certain high functionaries, rather than the quiet of our border relations should be compromised by any action putting out, or keeping out, Slavery from the church, *to go out ourselves*.

Here again we must be excused for thinking, that if either party is bound to act upon this very courteous suggestion, it is not us, exactly, who are admitted to stand upon the immutable ground of natural justice, the law of love as taught by God's Word, together with the principles of our founder, and of the first preachers of American Methodism—that it is not *us*, but *Slavery* that ought to gather up its dark train and depart.

And now for a few words more immediately to the Report before us.

I am in favor of it—

1st. Not because it contains so little of what we believe ourselves entitled to a claim ; but because it contains anything

Not because it waives so much that is material to our principles and aims ; but simply because it does involve the principle of prohibition.

I am in favor of it—

2d. Because this prospective prohibition is covered by the ægis of undisputed precedent.

The fourth restriction is, "*that they*"—the General Conference—"shall not revoke or change the general rules."

That is, they shall not strike out, or change the *sense* of either of those rules.

Neither of these two things is contemplated in this report, so far as relates to the chapter on slavery.

But the General Conference has ever held, and on various occasions exercised, the right of interpreting and constructing these same general rules.

They have this right.

They have it in respect to a code infinitely more sacred, and guarded by infinitely more stringent restrictions—that Word of God which may not be revoked nor changed in a single title, under pain of the second death.

But does the inhibition of change in the sacred records stand in the way of interpretation. Have not our Biblicists borne a strong hand in the work of expounding and fixing the sense of these records. Beside your Wesley, Coke, Clarke, Benson and Watson, and beside “the cheap commentary bill,” now on its passage through this body—beside all this, I demand, is it not the office of every preacher to construe the sacred text; to bring out and embody its latent meaning in direct denunciations of the ever multiplying forms of sin.

And, sir, while he neither revokes nor changes the sacred record, who shall hold him to answer for doing this, or how can he answer without doing it? I ask again, if these general rules are more sacred, or the restrictions which guard them more sacred, than that Word of the living God from which they themselves profess to derive their sole authority?

Common sense decides that these general rules, for the very reason that they are general rules, should be drawn out into such explicit provisions as new exigencies may demand, from time to time. And I instance, for illustration, by calling your attention to the general rule against traffic in contraband merchandize. This is selected because the phraseology of it is so closely similar to the rule against slavery.—It reads, “Buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty”—the exact counterpart of “buying and selling men, women and children,” &c. Now I say, in case this rule of buying and selling uncustomed goods were pleaded as an implied sanction of the practice of receiving and holding such goods, and the practice were so prevalent as to demand it—I say, common sense would justify and require that the implied intention of the rule should be authoritatively declared by the General Conference, and that that implied intention should be embodied in an enactment prohibiting the practice—prohibiting in terms what had only been prohibited by implication before.

This, I say, is common sense. For if it is a sin to defraud the Government by buying and selling goods that have not paid the duty, the act of receiving, holding, and using such

goods, with the knowledge that they were fraudulently obtained, must also be a sin, for reasons universally received and admitted.

Thus certain it is, that common sense justifies and requires, when an emergency demands it, that the unexpressed meaning of a rule should find expression in a way which may be adequate to such emergency.

But I now say, that the General Conference, on various emergencies since the adoption of the restrictive regulations, has acted on this principle of construing and applying the general rules, so as to give them a special application to special cases.

1. In regard to the matter of a correct faith, I do not ask, where is a correct faith required in the general rules? Nobody pretends it. But where it is clearly implied? To what part of these rules shall we look for the precise point at which a "correct faith," as a condition of membership, is intimated? Is it in the first part, where evil of every kind is forbidden? Is it under second head of doing good? Or is it enjoined under the third head, among the ordinances of God?

However these questions may be answered, it is certain that the General Conference of 1840 did make a "correct faith" a condition of membership. True, they did not make it a condition to those already in the Church, any more than this report proposes to make non slaveholding a condition to slaveholders who are now in the Church. But they did make a correct faith a condition to all those who should thereafter be admitted; so that a person with an incorrect faith was, by the authority of that General Conference, part 1, chap. 2, sec. 2, ans. 1, page 30, as absolutely ineligible to membership in our Church as a Sabbath-breaker, a drunkard, or a profane swearer. And they can only be presumed to have done it on the ground that the general rules, by some unexpressed meaning, did warrant their action in that matter.

I ask then, if a prospective exclusion of mercenary slaveholders from our Church, as proposed in this report, is not warranted by an equally clear construction, both of the letter and spirit of the general rules, collated with the admitted spirit of the Holy Scriptures, from which the general rules profess to derive their sole authority. But

2. By going back to the General Conference of 1836, we have a still more palpable instance of the exercise of this right of construction.

The general rules declare, that "there is only one condition of membership ; a desire to flee," etc., and they make the evidence of this desire to consist in the avoidance of all evil, in the performance of all works of mercy, and in observing all the ordinances of God. These general rules enumerate the ordinances of God by name, thus :

"The public worship of God."

"The ministry of the word, either read or expounded."

"Family and private prayer."

"Searching the Scriptures," and

"Fasting or abstinence."

The whole number is exactly *six*—just six, and no more.

And yet the General Conference of '56 construe this general rule so as to make it teach that baptism, not less than the eucharist, with the other five of the enumerated ordinances, shall be a test of all subsequent admissions to membership in our church.

For they say—part 1, chap. 3, sec. , ans. 1, page 30—

"Let none be received into the church until they have been baptized.

Hundreds and thousands had been admitted without baptism, because the general rule did not explicitly require it.

And they were left undisturbed in the rights of membership, because the constructed rule of '36 did not apply to them ; but only to such as were to be subsequently admitted.

Thus it was that the General Conference of that year, acting on the assumption that the general rules and the Scriptures warrant it—for there was no other ground on which they could have justified their action—did authoritatively declare that, from that time, no unbaptized person should ever be admitted into our church.

By way of corollary ;—

1, The General Conference ought to have the right of declaring the true construction of the General Rules.

2, That right involves the right of correcting a defective or false construction.

3, It has that right.

4, It has exercised that right.

5, It has exercised it freely and repeatedly.

6, It has exercised it in cases—one at least—exactly analagous to that in which this Report proposes its exercise.

I conclude by remarking : That, for the mere exercise of such a right of construction as does not disfranchise our existing membership, nor abridge any of their chartered or just rights, this General Conference is amenable to no earthly tribunal whatever. And that, as to those who, claiming and exercising the right of property in their fellow men, propose themselves as members of our church hereafter, they cannot justly complain of the action proposed by this Report, as violative of their rights, for the simple reason that they have no such rights.

Mr. Walker said :—I propose to confine myself to the merits of the question, and first shall pay some attention to the report itself. If I am able to progress in my remarks without embarrassment, I shall then endeavor to consider the report in reference to the provisions of the Discipline, as they now stand. I suppose I may safely assume that we are all opposed to the great evil of Slavery. The point where we differ, if any, is, probably, as to the best way of treating the subject, so far as we have anything to do with it. The report proposes four new terms of membership ; i. e. in some four different places in the report new terms of membership are proposed. First, the constitutional method of changing the Discipline. The first resolution proposes to secure a two-thirds vote of this General Conference for an alteration of the general rule, and then submit it to the several annual Conferences for concurrence.—This proposition bears *prima facie* evidence that the majority of that committee are impressed that the remainder of the report does not comport with the organic law. If the new conditions of membership in the new chapter proposed by the committee, are now covered by the organic law, why do the majority propose to insert them ? This Conference will not fail to perceive this point. The other new conditions of membership are found in the answers given in the report to the question, "What shall be done," &c. ?

(1.) "Therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to mem-

bership hereafter, where emancipation can be effected without injury to the slave."

I enquire, have we now, or have we ever had, such a condition of membership? I therefore call it a new condition. I know there is a reference to legal disability, but the fact remains unchanged. Because if emancipation can be effected without injury to the slave, the rule will exclude a man from the Church who does not do it, whatever other circumstances may exist.

(2.) Again the chapter provides in the second answer, "whenever a member of our Church, by any means, becomes the owner of a slave, it shall be the duty of the preacher in charge to call a committee of at least three members, who would investigate the case and determine the time in which such slave shall be freed, and on his neglect or refusal to abide by the decision of the said committee, he shall be dealt with as in cases of immorality."

If this is not clearly a new test of membership, then I have not known what our Discipline teaches; and I have been a daring reader of the Methodist Discipline for more than thirty years, and have sought to understand it, and I think I love it. Indeed, I love it too well to put my foot on any organic law, and trample it down. I feel a strong confidence that this Conference will be careful at this point.

Whatever ends need to be reached, let us seek to reach in accordance with law, rather than in violation of it. You know that to seek ends in violation of law, tends to the destruction of the system adopting such methods. Better endure a bad law; than to get a good one by such questionable methods. In this new condition there is no reference to any legal disability at all.—Whatever the circumstances of master and slave, the committee must decide when the slave shall be freed. The case admits of no discretion. If he fail to abide the decision, he is dealt with as in case of immorality.—This presents the doctrine, that Slavery under all circumstances is an immorality.

In the third answer proposed, several points are involved, some of them attainable, some, perhaps impracticable, but a person failing to do any one of these things, is debarred membership in the Church of God. (Mr. W. here showed that some of these things required in this answer could not

be done, as the laws of slave States exist, and that these Ministers could not effect a change of these laws. Rep.)

Several things are proposed in this answer which are right enough if practicable. But suppose they are beyond the control of the Church, shall the member, therefore, be arraigned and expelled from the Church? Would that be right? I have endeavored to speak of several places in the report, in which new terms of membership are proposed. Now, has this General Conference the power to adopt them as proposed? If we have the power, and it is right, let us do it. If we have not the authority, we should pause and seek the power to do these things.

The organic law touching membership in the Church is specifically defined in the general rules. Is it not the wisest nor safest kind of legislation, to base it on an *implication* founded on the organic law. It is not the safest in any case; and can it be wise or safe in legislating in the Church of God? The implication is said to be found in the rule touching Slavery. The rule is fatal to the argument. If the organic law had only touched this question, the case would be different. But when, in the organic law the given subject is taken up and spoken of in terms, the inquiry arises with force, whether in view of that specific action we have the authority to move one iota beyond what is covered in the organic law. It is not claimed that it is directly covered by the organic law. It is admitted that it is only by implication embraced under that law.

Now have you the power to change the conditions of membership in a case like this? The committee show that they themselves doubted. This is what their report seems to say: While this point is not covered by the organic law, we will get it there if we can, and then change the law afterwards. Is that a safe mode of legislation? Is it not better to begin at the beginning, and if we have not the conditional right to do it, require that right? If the organic law covers the point proposed, why propose any other mode of reaching the case. If not, why seek to do it without, and in violation of the organic law? Is that wise? Let us come out clearly on this point. I have not appeared here from choice, but from a sense of duty. The course taken by the brethren receives seeming countenance from the discipline. It asks the question, "What shall be done

for the extirpation," &c. We take a view of it and then conclude we have no ecclesiastical power to grapple with the monster evil. The chapter on Slavery has *never* contained *conditions* of Church membership, but of office. Now what connection is there between the extermination of the great evil of Slavery, and the exclusion of all slaveholders from the Church? It is said, if we will do this, other Churches will do the same, and then there would be found no Church that would receive slaveholding members, and Slavery would be robbed of the moral support of the Church. I do not believe other Churches would do this. But what would be the result if we excluded every slaveholder? What would that do? How many slaves would it free? Ecclesiastically we can do very little or nothing to extirpate what is the creature of law. So far as we have power in the premises, the evil seems still to abide. I may be regarded by some as pro-Slavery. (Voices, no doubt of it.) I stand or fall to my own master. I love the good opinions of our brethren. I love to live in their confidence. I know in my own heart how much I am opposed to Slavery. But what can we do? We may do what may cause bad results to come. Let us be careful not to do too much.

Dr. Thompson said: I am very happy that this discussion has commenced, and hope it will continue until every brother shall have had an opportunity to be heard. I hope it will be conducted in a spirit of charity. Any person may become charitable on this subject, if he will exercise a little patient thought. Take the map; on a certain latitude men are Pro-Slavery, on another Anti-Slavery, and those between the two are conservative. The reason is, man is frail, and the circumstances around him influence him. The question before us is two fold. First, ought Slaveholding to be tolerated? And, secondly, is the plan in the report the proper plan? When I say slaveholding, I do not mean anti-apostolic, apostolic, or post-apostolic slaveholding, but slaveholding in fifty-six in these United States. When I speak of the Theater, I do not speak of the Theater set up by Gregory Nazianzen, but as it exists in these United States, with its associations and tendencies. And when I speak of slaveholding, I speak of it as our own and nothing else. Let me abridge the argument by making concessions. Concede for the sake of the argument, that the negro is an inferior vari-

ety of the race that in his native home he a degraded wretch being ; that in his bondage in the United States, his is a condition of comfort ; that there are no three millions and a half of colored persons better housed, fed and clothed, ; that they are contented with their lot ; that their masters had them not from choice, but by inheritance ; that there are difficulties connected with their emancipation ; that the North is equally involved with the South, in the sin and profits of Slavery. Let it be conceded also, that God will bring good out of their bondage, &c. Take these propositions separately or collectively, they do not afford any justification for the holding of men in Slavery.

Is slaveholding to be tolerated in the church of God ? Holding men as property, is what I mean by slaveholding. This is the law, it chattelizes men. The slave may be sold for his master's debts, mortgaged, &c. Is that right ? Is it to be tolerated in the church of God ? Ask reason. Is it right that one man should hold another man as property ? What is a man ? A moral, rational, immortal, accountable being—capable of moral discernment—acting under a moral law, with a moral nature—capable of moral enjoyment. If he is accountable to God for his conduct, should he be controlled as an ox or an ass ? “You may acquire property by possession, which was not originally rightfully acquired ; but not when the original owner is present ; and where the slave is there is the owner. Knock at his breast, and ask him if he has no right to his limbs, his eyes, his ears. We see how some men reason and throw the sin upon God, that God authorizes it. When a man tells me that, I say as Marshall said, I have too much respect for Almighty God, to defend him against such an accusation. Go to the Bible. I would not refer to it, but it has been alluded to. The venerable Bishop Soule once said to me, Abraham had slaves bought with his money, and born in his house. I respond, these slaves were not American slaves—were not held as property. And I think I can convince him. Abraham armed his slaves, three hundred strong, and marched them into a hostile territory, and then marched them back. In the name of sense how could he have found his way back a slaveholder ? Suppose he had had slaves such as the Southern slaveholders had, could he have done this ?

Now to the Mosaic dispensation. I mention two prin-

ciples—First, the fugitive slave law of the Hebrews ; it was, that if a fugitive slave came into the country, the commonwealth was pledged to prevent him from being recaptured. On what principle was this practicable if the right of property was admitted ? What would be the effect of that Slavery ? Here was little Palestine surrounded by Pagan States, and if the commonwealth would not let the fugitives go back, these Pagan nations would not let the Hebrew slave that escaped to them go back. Again, they had an Emancipation Statute. To buy a Pagan slave was to put him into a process of Emancipation ; for a jubilee was proclaimed every seven years for Hebrew slaves, and every fifty for all the inhabitants.

The New Testament is not Pro-slavery—is not even tolerant of Slavery. The law of love and the principle of redemption run all through the world of revelation—underlie its surface—overtop its mountains—crop out of its hill sides, &c. Not so with those passages which are sometimes quoted on the subject of Slavery. I could as well prove that Lake Erie is medicated because a chest of medicine had sometime fallen into it. If the New Testament is Pro-Slavery the Apostles were moral homeopaths ! Do you believe that Onesimus was a slave ? (Cries of yes, no ! ) If so, how did the Apostle get him back ? A little girl was asked how the Lord made heaven and earth ? She answered, " he just said it ! " Not so with apostles, they had not the same power. If Paul was a supreme judge, with marshals at his back, and secret service money at his command, he might get him back. But to just *say* him back—tell him to go back, would be vain. Bring the fugitive here and let these Bishops and this Conference say go back. Should we do so, who would venture to send a letter back by him to his master ?

We are to judge by general principles. Minor principles are not to bend to general principles. What are they ? " God hath made of one blood," &c. Suppose you go to New Orleans, and see a man on the auction block. You find him to be your brother, from the same womb, the same loins, the same breasts. Would you hold him in Slavery ? If you did, what would your father say ? Thou shalt love, &c. Whatsoever ye would, &c. Does that law measure out your obligation, so that you can hold your fellow man in bondage ? This law has its guards. The ten command-

ments are its guards. If you measure up to adultery, you have made a mistake. So of stealing, so of idolatry and it is in view of these general principles, that we are to interpret minor principles.

If there is any thing tolerant of Slavery in the Bible, then the two revelations are in conflict—that of the New Testament, and that of nature. Even the South admits Slavery to be an evil to the body, the soul, the slave, the master, to the soil even. If God in nature and providence has pronounced it cursed, has he in his word pronounced it blessed? Arguments multiply as we advance. Look at the tendency of the New Testament. What has produced emancipation in Europe—in the northern States? Not infidelity, but christianity. And what has produced throughout the north the long universal cry for emancipation? The New Testament. If it could be maintained that any thing in the New Testament tended to perpetuate Slavery, why then the South ought to make their slaves read the word of God.

But there are objections to passing a rule by which all men who hold slaves shall be excluded from the church.

(1.) "That it cuts asunder the great commission to go and disciple all nations." I do not so understand it. If men are willing we should go to the South with the whole Gospel, and not an emasculated Gospel, we are ready to go; but not otherwise, and we justify ourselves by our Lord's words, "If they persecute you in one city, flee into another." I honor the father, living or dead, and yet I have not been taught adulation or adoration of mortal man. The mistake made by Bishop Asbury when he lowered the standard of the Discipline to establish the Church in the South, was one of the greatest ever made by a mortal man. Would you go to Utah and write in your Discipline that no man might have more than three wives! (Several voices, no.)

If Asbury could see the results of his, course, he would weep. Let the whole Gospel go there to work as the leaven, and leaven the whole lump. Is the Gospel anti-Slavery? If so, then sir, it has never been properly applied in the Southern States. Slavery has existed three hundred years in these United States, and is stronger to-day than it ever was before. Now I ask at what rate is the Gospel accomplishing its work, if after three hundred years Slavery is stronger than it ever was? This is important. There are

now three and a half million slaves, and after a comparatively short period we shall have forty millions, or a hundred millions. What is to accomplish their deliverance? Politics? I have no hope here. The sword? I pray God not—and another thought, we have no example of successful servile war; though the blood of blacks and whites should redden the Mississippi, it would not result in emancipation of the enslaved. I had hope that as the slaves increased, their value would diminish. But the opening of immense territories to slave labor has cut off that hope. My hope is in God—in the Church of God. Will the Church in the South ever rise, and take her stand in favor of emancipation, while there are Ministers, Bishops, and arch-Bishops who are justifying Slavery? Never until the Church at the North arises to a correct position is there any hope of success.

Mr. Hamilton remarked that he had voted against the proposition to extend the time, although he was very anxious to hear Dr. Thompson. He would now, however, vote for the motion to extend it one hour, or any length of time, rather than have this constant discussion on that subject.

After a long discussion on extending the time, it was so agreed to do, and Dr. Thompson resumed.

Dr. Thomson continued:

I have been accused of wandering from the Report, but think I have not, because the principle stated there is that man has no moral right of property in man.

(I have my doubts whether the new chapter is consistent with the general rule. I will indicate the reasons of these doubts, but shall not now elaborate my views on this question: First. The anti-slavery action of the church was less and less stringent, up to the time of the adoption of the General Rule.

Second, The purpose of the rule evidently, was to open the Southern States to the preaching of the Methodists.

Third. The interpretation given to the rule on Slavery by contemporaneous action, must fix the meaning of the General Rule, as designed to allow of slaveholding by members of the Church.

Fourth. The proposition to change the General Rule shows a doubt of the prosperity of the provisions of the new chapter while it remains as it is.) I propose to go to the root of the difficulty—to change the general rule. It is

wrong to attempt to compass in the chapter what you cannot do in the constitution. I say, honor bright, I nail my colors to the mast head, and would rather sink fifty fathoms with my colors in the right place, than to succeed by equivocal methods. I am here to listen, and have my doubts removed if they can be.

During the intervening discussion about extending the time, Dr. Thompson had spoken very highly of John A. Collins as a speaker, and as a man, and especially during the discussions of 1844. This explains the allusions which follow :

Mr. Collins, of Baltimore, said :

Permit me to respond to what I consider the highest compliment I ever received in my life, (referring to Dr. Thompson's expressions of regard for himself, especially in view of his, Mr. C.'s positions in the General Conference of 1844.) I knew I had friends who cherished me in their hearts, but to have that expression from Dr. Thompson, whom, as a man, I have learned to respect and honor, is a compliment indeed ; and, sir, if it be any satisfaction to him, from one so humble as myself, I will tell him what he did not know, before, that in 1852 I voted for him for Bishop, all through, and I should be glad if my Creator had made me just such a man as he, although I cannot accord with all his views. But I shall differ from him, as I will from any brother, squarely, calmly, and with no bad feelings, for this is no occasion for bad feelings.

I am a man of strong nerves, not much accustomed to be moved ; yet I find it difficult to command my feelings when I look at this General Conference, and the measures before it. We had long sittings on this subject in the Committee on Slavery, and thought it might be supposed that a question of this kind, disturbing the nation and the Church, might give rise to unpleasantness. I am happy to say that no such unpleasantness has arisen, and I say here, that loving every body in that Committee I learned to love them more, and to put them in my heart, though we differ widely on the question before us. And now, sir, I say I do not feel as a polemical gladiator here. That is beneath me. I wish to win no laurels, if I had the power to do so, as an able debator. A question of greater moment, and of deeper

interest is before us—one that concerns us all, in all the issues of this case.

I wish it understood in the outset that there are not two parties here, as existed in 1844, a genuine southern party, and an adverse party.

I am not here to defend Slavery from the Bible or any other source. I am not here to make that issue. Not at all, sir? The bretheren representing the Baltimore Conference are not pro-slavery. My honored people, which I in part represent on this floor, are not pro-slavery. And we have given the strongest possible proof of that fact. Why does Baltimore stand where she does? Why did she not go off with the Church South? Why maintain her allegiance to the Methodist Episcopal Church in these United States?

What is the reason? But one reason can be given. We do not believe in the sentiments of that Church. The section of the country with which I am not most familiar was passed through by an able man, proclaiming Slavery to be a Divine institution—a Divine right, running it out into all the ramifications of Society. Another followed him on the same strain. I stood up and met him on these issues. Our people did not go with the South. Why is she where she is?

If we had chosen to affiliate with the Church South, stars and garters awaited us. Baltimore would, in that case, have been the emporium of southern commerce. Baltimore would have had the Book Concern of the Church South, and would have concentrated the publishing interests of that Church. Yet she did not go; and why did she not go?

Again, we were met with persecutions of every kind. The political press let loose its political blood hounds upon us and pursued us. We were almost mobbed, yet we met it. We had one circuit nearly crushed out. It was a frontier circuit bounded by the Rappahannock river. Did we give up even that territory? No, sir. When it was dangerous to go there, when our preachers were almost driven off, when nearly all our members went off and took our Church there, having only about half a dozen in Warrentown, who remained firm in attachment to the Church, and I remained with them, through weal and woe, with pen and tongue, and with all the influence I could exert. I wend for adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church there as it is. These half dozen brethren conceived the design of building a Church.

It was built, and I had the honor of dedicating it. Some said there would be none present, &c. The morning came, and crowds were there. I went simply as a Methodist preacher. And what was the result,—not of the preaching or of my efforts but the result of the stand made in that instance ; that circuit is fast rising to be one of the first in our entire work, while the Methodist flag floats there just where it ought to float. (At this stage, a motion prevailed to adjourn.)

## TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

Mr. Collins resumed ; I shall, in the first place, pay some attention to two or three suggestions made by Dr. Thomson in his speech of yesterday. I wish to break the force of the first part of that speech, which I think may be done by a simple replication.

And first, he alluded to the course pursued on the part of the Hebrews, in case a fugitive servant fled from their jurisdiction. He was not remanded. In reply to that, I wish to say, the Hebrews were a theocracy, the most simple form of government under which men can be placed. That is not the form of our government. Ours is a complex government, embracing general and State governments, under the Constitution of the United States, binding all together. There are unquestionable provisions in that Constitution on this vexed question. Three-fifths of the slaves are represented in our national legislative councils. Then, sir, in several of the States of this Union, Slavery is sanctioned by law, by the civil authority. The Church of God is found in these States. We have an executive and a legislative department of a national character. The same is true of the States, and I submit, sir, that though that was an eloquent passage, finely put, and meeting hearty responses here, it is not applicable under our circumstances and under our government, which I believe the best under the sun. Dr. Thomson referred to the emancipation which has taken place in the northern States, attributing it to the moral element of those places. I admit there is as pure a moral sentiment in New England as elsewhere, that it has as much force there as in any other part of the globe. This moral sentiment has done vast good in its outward spread to the other States. I am willing to grant as much in this respect as may and ought

to be granted. Yet there are other considerations, considerations of State policy, which must have had an important bearing on emancipation in those States. The soil of New England is not adapted to slave labor." It is the cotton, sugar, hemp, tobacco, and rice growing country where slave labor is alone profitable. I can readily see how a proper regard to State considerations may have induced emancipation. Grain-growing countries are not adapted to Slavery.

I am glad New England emancipated her slaves. She did right. But it was not her superior moral sentiments, to those farther South. Why, sir, in illustration of this, five States, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and, I think, Iowa, were placed under the Ordinance of 1787, by which Slavery was prohibited over those territories. Who wrote that Ordinance? Thomas Jefferson, a Virginian, a man whose fame fills this world. He wrote it in 1783 or 1784. It was passed by the Congress of the confederated States, which sat contemporaneously with the framers of the Constitution itself. That Ordinance, the production of a Southern man, voted for by Southern men, has formed the basis for the freedom of the five great States I have named.

Unavailing efforts were made to introduce Slavery into Ohio. They were thwarted by the influence of the Southern States.

In this State of Indiana, in this Capitol, when Indiana was a territory, the territorial legislature petitioned Congress that Slavery might be admitted into the territory of Indiana. That petition went to a Special Committee of which John Randolph (the owner of 300 slaves, which he manumitted at his death) was chairman. That Committee's report was that the Ordinance of 1787 had worked well, and relieved the country of a great incubus, and it was improper to suspend the Ordinance of 1787. That report was sustained, and by Southern votes Indiana was preserved to freedom, and is now a free State.

Dr. Thomson says that Slavery is on the increase—that it has more power now than it formerly had. I beg to say that if this be the fact, the M. E. Church is not responsible for it. Religion never made Slavery. The M. E. Church never made Slavery. She is not responsible as the author of it. However true the remark of Dr. Thomson may be, as to the increase of Slave power in certain places, and I

admit the force of his remark in some respects ; however true it may be in other parts, it is a great mistake in regard to that part of slave territory within our bounds. It is not on the increase there. Perhaps you will be surprised to learn that in the whole of Baltimore City Station, according to testimony of brethren well informed on the subject, there is but one single slaveholder, and it is doubtful that there is even one.

We have a colored membership of from 15,000 to 20,000. They have good churches there, they sing more sweetly, and pray more powerfully, than any people I have ever seen. I had rather preach to them than to any other people. They have their Sabbath and day schools. You may thread the street of Baltimore, and you will not meet with a single colored beggar. We do meet with beggars there, but they do not come from the descendants of Africa. Slavery is not on the increase there. Bro. Griffith says it is on the decrease. (Several voices, true.) Our people there have some sense. They know they can hire labor cheaper than they can buy it and become responsible for the clothing, feeding, and sustaining of the slaves when unable to labor. Slavery is on the decrease there, and if the Discipline be permitted to remain as it is, and operate as it has been doing, it will still decrease. These remarks will serve to break the force of Dr. Thomson's speech. I am sorry to differ from him, but the nature of the case demanded it.

I believe it is admitted, given up, by the Chairman of the Committee on Slavery, and the friends of the report, that it makes a new term of membership. (Several voices—and among them Mr. Raymond's—no, no.) Then, said Mr. Collins, I shall proceed to prove it.

The first answer to the question, what shall be done for the extirpation of the great evil of Slavery? "Therefore no slaveholder shall hereafter be eligible to membership," &c. Is not that a new term of membership? Is emancipation now a term of membership? Has it ever been made a test of membership? If it has, I have failed to discover it. I have tried to understand Methodist discipline, and if such a test has ever been placed before an applicant for membership in our Church, it has not happened in my day. You cannot find it in the book. It makes a new test of membership. My friend, Dr. Raymond, cannot get out of it.

In the second answer, we have a new term in a two-fold sense. I wish to touch this point lightly. "Whenever a member of our Church becomes by any means the owner of a slave, it shall be the duty of the preacher in charge to call a committee," &c. Now, sir, in the slaveholding part of our Conference, and I presume it is so in the greater part of our Conferences in slave-territory, the larger part of our members do not hold slaves—They might become the owners of slaves by inheritance or gift; would they not by this provision be brought before a committee? and if they refused to appear, or would not abide the decision of the committee, would they not be liable as in cases of immorality? No one can dispute that, and that hence this is a new term of membership, to those even now members in the Church. It has the bearing and force of an *ex post facto* law. It does this to all intents and purposes. It never was done before.

Again, there are members of our Church who are now slaveholders, who are liable under this proposed chapter, "whenever a member of our Church, by *any means* becomes the owner of a slave," &c., by "*any means*," by bequest or natural *increase*, what is to be done with him? He must be brought before a committee, and if he refuses to go, he is to be tried for immorality. In these three particulars then, this document makes non-slaveholding a test of membership.

The third answer provides for giving them "such compensation as shall be just and equal," and for their proper treatment. That makes a new test, and why? It changes entirely the relation of master and slave. It makes the slave a free man. (Amen, said several.) I am glad you say amen; it gives your endorsement of what I say. I say, then, this passage does, in effect, make non-slaveholding a test of membership in our Church. This is true of each of these points separately, and of all together. They are like four hooks tied together, with which I have seen fishermen fish. You are to be caught on one or the other of them—there is no escape.

Again, sir, another feature of this report to which I wish to call your attention is, the resolution looking to a change in the general rule. I speak now in defense of my people. I never knew an instance in the bounds of Baltimore Conference, in which a member of our Church separated hus-

bands and wives, parents and children. I have tried to recollect an instance, and have called on Bro. Griffith, who has a memory as tenacious as a tar-barrel, to see if he can remember such an instance. He cannot. Professor Nadal says an instance of this kind happened in old St. Mary's county, in which a man sold a child from its mother. He was arrested and expelled from the Church for it, and lived and died out of the Church.

Now, sir, I submit that this feature of the report be received by our people as an act of great unkindness, a tacit reproach. They hold their members to these duties, and regard these relations as sacredly as any members of this Conference.

I will now argue the constitutional question. I want to build this fence as high as the Discipline builds it, and to show that this action cannot be taken without a violation of the Constitution. We have a Constitution; our Church is under its control. The Constitution defines the rights and duties of those under its control. Need I argue this at all? It must be admitted by all who have read this book with any degree of care.

We cannot go beyond the grants in this charter. As pertinent to this point, I affirm that simple slaveholding was *never* unqualifiedly made a test of membership in the Methodist Church. You will read this book, (Emory's History of Discipline,) and the Discipline in vain to find any such provision. It cannot be found. The measures adopted in the Christmas Conference of 1784, when the M. E. Church was organized, were confessedly the most stringent that were ever adopted. And yet, there is that in these very measures that operates as an entire drawback. What is it? These rules were not intended to affect the members of our Church any farther than was consistent with the laws of the States where they resided. This takes off the stringency of these rules from members residing in Southern States; and then it was added: "And respecting our brethren in Virginia and Maryland, we allow them two years to consider the expediency of compliance or non-compliance with this rule." And then, to show you that the fathers made distinction, buying and selling, or holding slaves, I read you this question and answer: "What shall be done with our members who buy and sell slaves, or give them away?" *Ans.*

"They are to be expelled, unless they buy them to free them." They made this distinction between slaveholding, and buying and selling slaves. And these measures were suspended, any why? Asbury went South and many observations. He saw they were improper, and he suspended them. The rule itself was suspended by the Conference of 1785. Dr. Coke suspended these rules, adopted by an annual Conference. I doubt whether you, sir, or the whole bench of Bishops would do it; yet he did it. And it was done because all the power was formed in the annual Conference. I turn to page 181, (Emory's History of Discipline,) where the General Cule was first introduced on the subject on Slavery. It was introduced in America. Mr. Wesley never made that rule. It never was found in his general rules, and down to this time no such rule is found in the discipline of our Wesleyan Brethren. It is not even contained in their instructions to their missionaries. They gave them no other directions than simply to preach the Gospel.

The rule of 1784 was amended in 1785. I am glad they amended it, because all the devils in hell cannot sell the *soul* of a man. I have heard this statement, that men could enslave the souls of men, but it cannot be done. I heard of a man who had a slave, once, who went to church and became converted, and was made happy in the love of God. His master chastised him for it, but he went again, and was again chastised. He was taken sick. His master treated him unkindly, and laid his sickness to his attendance upon church. The man heard his master, turned over in his bed, and said "glory to God, I'm free," and went to Heaven. You cannot sell the soul of a man. It is the property of Almighty God. So far as I know, the members of our Church, do not, any of them, claim that the soul of a man can be bought and sold.

[J. B. Finley cried out—they do sell the soul—the body would not be worth a snuff of tobacco without the soul.]

In 1808, is the important period, the general rule went into the Discipline, as it now stands, and that was the General Conference which formed this General Conference. Before that period it was composed of all the elderships of the Church. That Conference gave us general powers, but under certain restrictions. They gave this General Rule its present shape and form; and to show you that the fathers

did not believe that it affected mere slaveholding, they put the chapter into the Discipline on Slavery as it now stands; showing most clearly their sense of the general rule, that it did not make slaveholding a test of membership in the Church. In further confirmation, I will state what also occurred in 1796. The chapter on Slavery that was adopted in 1796, shows that they did not intend to make slaveholding a test of membership, because they made non-slaveholding a test of *official* membership in those States where the laws allowed of emancipation, and permitted the liberated slave to enjoy his liberty. Under the former arrangement no slaveholder might be received into the Society, until the preacher having charge of the circuit had spoken to him freely on the subject of Slavery. That was stricken out, and the fact that it was stricken out in 1808 goes to show that simple slaveholding was never thought; intended, or believed to be a bar to membership.

Sir, I hold that these provisions in the chapter, which make slaveholding a test of membership, are unconstitutional. I know the brethren have tried to steer around it.—They are good navigators, but they cannot evade it. This test cannot go into the book without the alteration of the general rule on that subject, and that cannot be done except in a certain way. But leaving that rule untouched, you put into the book a statute that conflicts directly with the rule, and with all rational interpretation of it. This body itself has given its sanction to this showing. Were not resolutions passed around to the annual Conferences, almost identical with this proposed chapter? Did not that show that these brethren believed they could not get into the book without this process? Why did they send these resolutions around? Clearly because they judged it necessary to pursue this process. That measure has failed, and now, without attempting any change of the general rule, they propose to put it into the book.

I hold again that this is confirmed by another fact, in regard to the rule on spirituous liquors. The change was sought to be made in 1836, 1840, and 1844, and was about to be introduced, until this constitutional difficulty was stared.

I started it myself in 1844, and it did not go into the book until 1848, and it was right, and I ask, sir, upon a

question like this, of great importance—greater than any other—whether to attempt to put that into the book in this form, there is not a violation of our Constitution.

But it is objected that Baptism, and a proper confession of faith, have been made tests of membership, without any alteration of the general rules. This is admitted, and for the plainest possible reason, there was no necessity for it. These instances are not analogous. Are not our articles of faith fundamental? We cannot touch them. They are part and parcel of the Constitution of the Church. (Mr. Collins read the article concerning the sacraments, and commented upon it.) So that baptism by our articles of faith, is an acknowledged sacrament. Every member of the M. E. Church ought to subscribe to this and therefore it is right and proper that every man, before admission, should say that he approves these articles and should be baptized. What is the rule of construing the Constitution? What it grants may be done. What it withholds cannot be done. This is the difference between organic and legislative bodies. The organic body may lay down rules. The legislative bodies may carry out those rules. We have a Constitution. One of our disciplinary rules teaches the necessity of baptism before admission into the M. E. Church. Another makes a profession of faith, and these are simply a carrying out of the Constitution. I submit that these objections do not hold in this case. There was no necessity for changing the general rule, to require baptism and confession of faith before admission into our societies, because these requisitions were in the Constitution. I come to the conclusion, in which I should hope every brother here will agree with me, that this report does make new tests of membership. It is not in accordance with the Constitution, and cannot be done without a conflict with the Constitution. You did right, sir! This Bench of bishops did right. You said what was true and you might have said it stronger. It is due to candor to say, that I shall feel constrained to vote against the other measure proposed—the change in the general rule, though it is proposed to be done in a constitutional way, and you have a right to do it, but I beg you to pause before you do it, because when you do it, you unchurch a great many of my people.

Again, this test is unknown to the christian church. If

we except the Quakers, as they are called, and some other inconsiderable sects; there is no great leading denomination of christians, that makes non-Slaveholding a test of membership.

I say in your presence, and in the presence of this Conference, I trust you will move with great caution,—What right have we to make tests of membership in the fold of Christ. Is he not the Lord and Lawgiver? Has he delegated that right to any? He has done it. We have no right to make any test of membership, not clearly laid down by Christ. It is assumed in a certain quarter, by a gentleman on the other side of the water, that he holds this right. But we do not submit to the claim.—I doubt the authority of the Conference to do it, unless it is clearly and specifically set down in the word of God, every branch of the church is a representative of the word of itself, and may adopt such rules and tests as are clearly taught in the word of God, but not otherwise.

So of class meetings. I say, sir, if you cannot get a clear warrant for them in this book, (the Bible,) you cannot make it a test. And I respect it—I question our authority as a branch of the church, to make any test of membership, that is not clearly warranted in the word of God. There is much discussion as to the question of the Bible sanctioning Slavery. It is claimed in some places that there is a divine sanction of Slavery. I am sorry, in my very heart, that the precious Bible was ever referred to in this manner.

You, sir, know the reason, and this Conference knows the reason. The time was when this book was never referred to in defence of Slavery. I shall not follow this train of argument. I shall say the Bible is a book of facts. I know that speeches are made about the divine right of Slavery. I could make a speech if I should try. I say this, that is not the question—Slavery is not an original question of this body. If it were in open question, you would find me in the right place, laboring at the strong oar. But that is not the question. It is the question as connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, bound by her general rules and controlled by her constitution. What can we do? Nothing more than we can do in a constitutional way. I meet it in this aspect alone, and discuss it in this aspect alone. In this aspect alone it comes before this body. Now, sir, I

submit that we sometimes strike wide of the mark. It is argued that christianity is hostile to Slavery. Suppose we admit it, we lose nothing by the admission. Christianity is the great regenerator and elevator of the race, and if it have free access, it will triumph over all evils and ills, and nothing would so gladden the heart of the true philanthropist.

On this subject, I say we need nothing but the light of truth. Let the gospel have free course. Not an emasculated gospel, but the pure gospel, the doctrines of the cross. Let these doctrines, right from the gross, reach master and slave alike, there is no power on earth or hell that can prevent it from accomplishing its designed object. With that gospel the apostles went to the Gentile world.

When Paul stood in the Areopagas, he did not stop to entertain them with speculation. He came right to the doctrines of the cross that revolutionized the Roman Empire, and will, if adhered to, revolutionize the world (Mr. Collins here repeated an extract, showing that christianity, to be successful, appealed not to the civil power, but relied upon its own intrinsic force and betuty, to secure its success.)

This whole subject is to be reached by moral power ; by that law of love referred to by the committee. It is a moral power that is to shake the nations, to imbed truth into the heart and conscience of mankind, to sweep the world with its mighty influence and carry all before it. This moral power is the lever to move the whole world, and prepare it for heaven. (Mr. Collins referred to Martin Luther.) It was that moral power, which struck the scintallations of the light of protestantism. And when Zuingle departed from the principle, he weakened the cause of the reformation. This moral power can reach the autocrat on his throne. It can act everywhere. And it is this that is to accomplish anything on this great question. We might learn certain things on this subject, in the scriptures. You recollect the parable of the tares. Christ sowed good seed and the enemy sowed tares. The disciples wanted to root them up, but Christ forbade it. "Let both grow until the harvest." I interpret it thus : Some evils are such that it will do more harm to meddle than to desist, and such I believe to be the fact in regard to this question.

Again, we might learn a lesson from the events taking place under Divine Providence. There are a great many evils in the Church and in the world. When I look at the horrid caricature of the Christian religion made by prelates and proud dignataries ; when I look at the multitudes thronging these Cathedrals ; when I look at these things, I am surprised that God has not put a plow-share under them and upturned them. There are other evils of like character. The exterminating wars of the Hebrews, against the Philistines, what interpretation can we give of them ? One evil was used, or permitted, to correct another. The great evil in that case was idolatry. And it was the obvious method of Providence for exterminating idolatry. So in reference to other evils. Thus it is in medicine ; one poison is given to counteract and expel another. How do we know but God uses the instrumentality of converted slaveholders to accomplish the object so much desired by this Conference ; to help on what I conceive to be a cause of the first moment the Colonization Society, and plant on the coast of Africa its entire length the institutions of Christianity, that thus the entire land may be brought to the knowledge of the truth. I am not satisfied of one thing—that it is the religious element of the South that has operated to produce any conscience at all upon this subject. There is a religious element there, and while I do not wish to cast any reflections upon other branches of the Church of Christ, the South is more indebted for this element to the M. E. Church than to any other.

They have created this element, I know they have done it. They have done it in a method left out of the statements in the report : they have done it by preventing slaveholding in the Methodist itinerancy. The Baltimore Conference has kept it out, and the simple influence of that provision alone will do more for this object than the passage of that report, for that would do incalculable harm. I have seen masters and slaves happy in the love of God. I cannot agree with Bro. Hosmer, *i. e.*, if he has been correctly reported, in saying that the slaveholders and slaves cannot be Christians.—I have been with them when converted and when dying. I have heard that ringing shout, just as they were passing away. I have stood by their dying couch, and helped on the shout that wafted them to heaven. I have seen masters

and servants in the same parlor, rejoicing together. I have seen masters die and their servants in the room. More than this, in Calvert county, at camp-meeting, I have seen the old slave in the stand, and his master standing by my side, the slave thundering it out and the master cheering him on, saying, "go ahead, Tom—you are right," &c. It won't do to tell me that slaves cannot be Christians, or that slaveholders cannot be Christians. I know better, thank God, I know better. The first public duty assigned me in the Church was to lead a colored class. We always had a glorious time. I shall never forget that, nor Aunt Lucy Neal, who used to hug me whenever she met me, in the streets or anywhere else. You cannot tear from me the conviction that they are Christians. I wish I had five hundred of them here to sing for you, they would put you in a good frame. In this great struggle the Baltimore Conference has done as much as any other body.

Who made those rules in 1784? I am told there was not a northern man in that Conference. Who made those rules? The preachers from Maryland and Virginia? They put those restrictions on their hands. They do not want you to impose a burden on them which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear. I venerate the fathers. I remember them with interest. I was converted through their instrumentality. They worked nobly. Their sentiments on Slavery I have referred to again and again. Why did not they make rules against it. Why did they leave, in the Discipline, this fatal margin? Why did they not take it away? They did every thing else they tried. They spread Scriptural holiness all over these lands. They were the means, not only of reviving religion in our own church, but in all others. They elevated the cause of God, and covered the country with the memory of their deeds. Why is it that, accomplishing all this, these eminent, holy men did not destroy Slavery? Why did they leave it in the church? Not that they backslid. Francis Asbury, that great Apostle, was no backslider! Wm. McKendree was no backslider! The associates of these men were no backsliders. Why did not these men, with their strong arm and powerful voice, sweep this great evil from the Methodist Episcopal church? They could not do it. They could not uproot civil authority, nor civil law. They were met by a barrier they could

not cross. And, what they could not do in that day, we cannot do in this, by the measures proposed in that report. Let the gospel go in its simplicity, untrammelled, and that will do what nothing else can.

In the next place, a measure of this kind is schismatic in its tendency. Do not be alarmed. I will tell you what I mean by schism. I mean what Dr. Campbell does, as quoted by Mr. Watson. "It does not usually signify an open separation, but we may become guilty of it by such alienation in spirit and feeling as violates the union of the body. I am not insensible to the importance of such acts as lead to an open rupture, nor to the value of a visible union; but there is a different union, a union of the spirit God in the hearts of Christians—a union of love and of experience in the hearts of Christians, and these measures tend to sever that union. What have we done, sir, that these measures should be pressed upon us? Have we become slaveholders? Do we advocate the doctrines of slavery in any sense? We stand just where we have stood ever since we became an integral part of the Church. What have my people done, sir? Why is this additional embarrassment thrown upon us, and put in our way? Did we not stand up in 1845, and resist the innovations which were sought to be forced upon the Church? There sits the man, sir, that offered the resolution—a delegate from Baltimore—which prevented slavery from going into our episcopacy. Have not we passed through a great struggle, losing a small part of our territory? What have we done that this measure should be invoked here? Had we been cowards, traitors, unfaithful to the book, our task might have been easy. But we passed through that struggle, with all its difficulties. In that contest we said to our people, and we supposed we had a right to say, the book will remain as it is. That doctrine has triumphed. The battle has been fought. The victory has been won, and will you send us out to fight that battle over again. Do you want to see us divided among ourselves? I know you do not. I say what I think. I have a right to say that this measure will produce these effects. You will excuse me, sir, if I say I love that body (the Baltimore Conference) peculiarly. A man may love his own family, without being deficient in love to others.

There stands the Baltimore Conference, venerable for her

antiquity, strong in the confidence of the community, warm in the affections of our Ministers and people. There she stands, having done as much to plant the tree of Methodism on the virgin soil of this country as any other part of the body, until that tree has attained its present majestic dimensions, covering with its grateful shade this whole land.— There she stands erect, not having changed a principle, true to the doctrines and institutions of the Church. Her standing where she does, is a monument of what she is, and an indication of where she wants to be. Will you put this yoke on her neck? By all that is common in our doctrines, experience, hopes, enjoyments, by the memories of the past, and the condition of the present, by the prospects of the future, I say to you, pause in that measure. Let nothing go into that book. Do not do it. The preachers in the Baltimore Conference, in an early day, were wafted on the wave of emigration, crossed the Alleghanies, traveled the prairies of the west, and some of them have scaled the Rocky Mountains. I might call upon you by every recollection to come to this rescue, I might appeal to New England on this subject—to those middle conferences which, I believe, will stand by us in this issue—to the Western Conferences. I would I had the power to give the touch that would spring the old Methodist fire. By the memory of our common dead, I ask you to let that book be. No man will call me a pro-Slavery man. No man should doubt my love to the colored people.

(Mr. Collins here related an incident in Fanquier county, Virginia, which showed how strong was the attachment of the colored people for him. He could not pass through the country, but was thronged by them, and greeted with the warmest expressions of affection.) I tell you what, I thought I would rather have that name, John A. Collins, humble, unhonored, as it is, but embalmed in the memories of these colored people, than the brightest gem that decks the monarch's brow, or the brightest title that could be conferred, because it is a monument of faith and love never to be thrown down. It will shine through eternity. Now, sir, for all these reasons and many others, I wind up my remarks with this expression, made in substance by another: "The union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in doctrine, senti-

ment, love, and practice, or the Discipline as it is, now and forever, one and inseparable."

A. J. Phelps, of Black River Conference, said :

MR. PRESIDENT :—I do not arise with the view of making an exhibition of rhetoric or poetry, but to say a few plain things in a plain way. I am not ignorant of the extreme difficulty of answering an argument founded in sympathy, especially when the response must be based upon stern fact. But, Sir, this work seems reserved for some one, and I shall have the temerity to attempt it.

It appears to me almost every feature, bearing against this measure, is greatly over drawn ; the numerous memberships to be affected ; the vast interests jeopardized in conferences of recent creation in slave territory ; our obligations to support these conferences to which we are said to be solemnly and sacredly pledged ; the sacrifice and hazard of self-denying men of God, and the interests of poor slaves themselves—are all impressed upon us, to teach us the inexpediency of this measure.

But let us look at a few statistics bearing upon these aspects of the subject.

An impression prevails to considerable extent, that a white membership of 143,000 is to be directly affected by any action on this subject. Whereas, the general minutes of 1855, show a white membership of only 136,332 in the six conferences, in whole or in part in slave territory ; while nearly one-third of Baltimore conference, and more than half of Philadelphia, besides small portions of other conferences, lie in the free States. In Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences alone, we have 43,967 members in free territory, which deducted from the total white membership of the six conferences, leave 92,363. Of this showing, however, 865 are local preachers already under restriction, and therefore, not capable of being personally affected by any proposed change ; and 11,946 are only on trial ; deduct these two classes, making 12,811, from the 92,363 situated in slave territory, and we have a membership in full connexion within those limits of 79,552, instead of 143,000 ; a large discount—nearly fifty per cent. From this footing, deduct one-third for minors ; and one-third for married ladies, and we find remaining 26,517—the highest probable number who are capable of holding slaves. This, therefore, is the largest

number who can be personally affected by the proposed measure, provided every one capable of holding a slave is an actual slaveholder. But how is this? The census of 1850, shows that only one-third of the families of the white population hold slaves. Then provided our members are no better than the masses, the probable number of slaveholders among us would be 8,834. But if all our members in that region are superior Methodists—possessing good tender hearts, and only hold slaves for the good of the enslaved, as presented by their apologists, then the rule hurts no one. But suppose they are only comparatively good, and have some conscience, such as the climate will allow, and only wish to make gain out of human bones and sinews and souls, with moderation and modesty, then the proportion of slaveholders in the church must be less than in the masses. What then is the probability? How many slaveholders have we in the M. E. Church? Have we 5,000? or 1,000? Dr. Durbin, who is well posted in about every thing, has expressed the opinion that we have less than 1,000 slaveholders in the church, and we set this down good authority.

If this basis be correct, we have 1,000 slaveholders in the church, whose connexion with us exposes 700,000 Methodists in the free States to taunts and jeers from their enemies, to the most excruciating tortures in their own bosoms; while more than 4,000 ministers are hindered in the great work of saving souls. The old doctrine is reversed. Our fathers taught, "better one suffer than many." But now the sentiment is, better 700,000 suffer than 1,000,

But this inferior minority of 1 to 700 must be sustained at any expense. The moral force of the whole church must defend oppressors. Church authorities and church papers must apologize for the nefarious villainy. The press must be muzzled, and every possible expedient siezed upon to hold the 700 in check, and give the 1 ascendancy.

Here are 700,000 whom Christ hath redeemed, withering under the goadings of a lacerated conscience, and trembling under the most fearful apprehension of the curse of Almighty God. But there hangs the monster, like the lasso of Tlug, about the neck of his victim, till, strangled and suffocated, the church agonizes as in the last throes of death.

As the apologist charged, Sir, we confess to sickness. He taunts us with being sick at the north, and advises us to take

medicine. We confess to sickness—sickness which we fear may prove fatal. For God's sake give us the medicine—any kind, ipecac, or any thing that will stir the fatal bile and throw off the putrid matter.

In heaven's name it is yours to heal this malady—to cut the ligaments that bind us—to turn away the tide of wrath and let the church of God go free. May the infinite Spirit help us.

It is earnestly plead that are under solemn obligations to the three newly created conferences in slave territory. Let us look at this matter a moment. These conferences, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Missouri, taken together, number 52 effective preachers in full connexion, with a white membership of 10,679, making a proportion of 205 members to each effective minister in the three conferences ; and yet it has cost the Missionary Society to carry forward this work for two years, 1855 and 1856, \$16,200 ; and taking for granted that like appropriations were made for 1853 and 1854, it has drawn from our missionary funds to support these three conferences, consisting of 52 members, all told, the round sum of \$32,400. Appropriations in the same ratio for the work in the United States alone, leaving out of account Kansas and Nebraska, and other distant fields, would require an outlay of more than \$2,000,000 for domestic missions only.

One of the strong arguments for the institution of these conferences, was based upon the salutary influence they might exert upon the poor slave ; and now we listen to the most heart-stirring appeals to our sympathy on the same subject. If their hands are tied, who is to minister to the poor slave ? If they are crippled, who is to come near to lift up the poor wretches, and minister to their famishing souls ? All this sounds well, but let see how it applies to these conferences. How many colored people, bond and free, have been gathered into the church within the limits of these three conferences ? The vast number of 365, all told ; and could such as are slaves among them be here, and be allowed to speak, what would they be likely to say ? Would they caution you, as their friends do this day, be sure not to put any thing in the book against slavery, for it will do us harm ? No, never.

But it is argued they are prospering and increasing among

the whites, and therefore nothing should be done to cripple them. I would be sorry to cripple them to be sure, if invincible principle would not cripple them. But how much are they increasing? Kentucky conference has decreased 355; but the three, taken together, have increased 200 in all; so they are prospering too much to have anything put in the book. But it is strongly urged also, we have instituted these conferences, and sent good men of God there, and we are solemnly bound now to support them, and not to hamper them.

True, we must stand by them so long as we keep them there; but if they are muzzled by slaveocrats they must not remain. I have the sincerest sympathy for these brave men of God, who have labored and suffered want and hunger on the unfruitful soil; and we make no war with the Board of Missions, who have partly supplied their bread. But it is lamentable that such a necessity was ever created or should be continued with so little promise.

Where is the utility of such a sacrifice of men and means; Might not the church South do this work at far less expense- And pray where is the difference? Do not they preach the same gospel, in the same way? Do the preachers of the church South assure their people they have no intention to interfere with the peculiar institution? And do not our ministers, occupy a position by their side, give the same assurance? Do they labor to convince the people that they are not Anti-Slavery in any offensive sense? Wherein do our ministers differ? Do they teach the slave to be quiet and passive under the galling yoke? and do our ministers come short in enforcing this sublime doctrine?

It is urged that it is our duty to extend the Methodist Episcopal Church into the midst of slavery, with the view of securing greater influence, and thereby uproot slavery. But it must be certain that any religious organization not repudiating Slavery, not only takes a viper to its bosom, but also contributes influence to render the grievous sin popular, especially when the Church is pushed into the midst of Slavery, and Church members seem eager to throw their arms around oppressors, and bring them into fellowship. How can the advocates of Slavery, in Church or State, with this direct sanction of the Church, North and South, fail to regard themselves strongly supported?

The doctrine that a lax faith and easy morals are as promotive of true godliness as that to endorse a grievous sin is the best means of removing that sin, can hardly be a question in morals.

It is further alleged that our anti-Slavery Discipline will do much toward extirpating this great evil.

We submit. When? and how? This excellent little book has long lived in the land of oppression. Has it advanced in the direction of freedom? Has it made inroads upon Slavery, or has Slavery made inroads upon the book? Has it ever purged the Church of Slavery in its most offensive forms? Nay, verily; but where left to Southern management, Slavery has wrung out the last drop of its heart's blood, and left it a speechless ghost.

Besides, by the showing of wise apologists, our Discipline is greatly in the shade in comparison with the Discipline of the Church South, just in proportion as a living monster is more to be feared than a soulless, breathless carcass. Their Discipline contains no constitutional provision to entail Slavery to the Church forever: whereas, it is stoutly asserted that our Discipline constitutionally and irretrievably fastens Slavery upon us, and upon the generations to come. But allow me to say, sir, I endorse this sentiment just as I would endorse the Koran. This, however, is the plea. But, sir, were this true, we should be an age, at least, behind the Church South. Members who subscribe this doctrine ought to look up to the ministers of the Church South, as our fathers in the Revolution looked up to Washington, and follow them as great patriots and distinguished leaders in reform—remembering, however, that we have no occasion to copy them in trampling what they regarded the troublesome Constitution, under foot.

But what shall be done? *What shall be done, sir?* Give these noble-hearted, godly men a "*plank*"—an anti-Slavery plank, to rest their foot upon, and let them bound out and meet the howling tempest, brave the mountain surges, and survive. Give them, sir, scions from the tall branches of the majestic tree, where the eagle rests, and let them go forth weeping, bearing this precious seed, and, doubtless, they shall return rejoicing, bearing their sheaves with them.

But should these well-meant and tearful efforts, for a time, prove unsuccessful, what then? Would you have the herald of truth

and life, the messenger of God, lower the standard, to meet the infidelity and vitiated tastes of the people?

Should a missionary, sent out to some heathen land, be silenced, and his life put in jeopardy, because his creed repudiated the worship of idols? Would you advise him to define his position as to do violence to the Christian faith? Would you counsel him to assure the people that he was no more opposed to idol worship than the heathen themselves? Would you instruct him to admit idolators to Church fellowship, that he might there exert a more salutary influence against the practice of idolatry? Certainly you must if you intend to make your practice harmonize with sentiments expressed upon this Conference floor. It has been stated here, "The call is," "go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." But this cannot be done in slavery if you reject slaveholders from the Church. Precisely the same plea might be urged for licensing every conceivable enormity. Is this the true position. Then you must conform the Holy Gospel of the *guileless* Prince, to Heathenism, Mohammedism, and the endless catalogue of demoralizers. Then, with a much less stoop than Slavery demands, the same gospel may be made to harmonize with Sabbath breakers, dancing-schools, theatres, and every other class of erratics who would receive the Gospel gladly when thus conformed to their choice sins. What do you say; are you ready for the experiment? But to return. What would be done with the missionary in such a crisis as above described? One of two things, certainly. You would either recall him and give him position, where he might proclaim the *one true God*, the *only* object of supreme worship. or you would exhort him to integrity and faithfulness to the last, and let his flowing blood seal his testimony for the truth, and prove the seed of a rising Church. This is the true ground; let it be applied then to slavery as to heathendom in proportion to the enormity of the guilt. Forasmuch then as subverting the ways of God, and chaining the bodies and souls of God's free men, involves deeper moral turpitude, and must be more odious in the sight of God than ignorant idolatry, we may not, we must not tamper with the greater evil of Slavery.

Sir, we must give these sterling men of God the torch of truth and liberty, and let them go forth, in this bleak world of sin, like the early disciples, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, and when persecuted in one city, beyond endurance, let them flee to another, and the God of Israel shall give them rest.

Allow me to say before taking my seat, I favor the report of the committee on Slavery, not because it comes up to my views of what should be enacted on this subject. Nor would my sense of responsibility allow me to go for any measure as a compromise where so much of principle is involved. I take this weak solution, sir, just as in extremity I would take greatly diluted aliment as the

best means at hand for prolonging life. My vote will be in favor of this report, because there is no present hope of enacting a more stringent and less encumbered rule, and because I think this a small advance toward liberty. I go for it so far as constitutionality is concerned, with a whole heart and a good conscience, believing most sincerely that the general rules neither require nor authorize the holding of human beings as property.

Sir, we are Methodists, called of God to "spread Scriptural holiness over these lands," and to commend the pure, wholesome, and equal provisions of the Gospel to our common humanity. Can we consistently countenance such enormities as make us the hiss and by-word of infidels, and render us suspicious in the estimation of good men of all nations. Nay, is it even expedient to baptize such provoking vice as involves our standard of piety in easy virtue and doubtful morality? if not, indeed, in gross immorality. In the name of God, let us assert our liberty; let us throw off this incubus and be free.

This is a crisis in our history. By the adoption or rejection of this measure, we are to settle the destiny of the M. E. Church for years, perhaps for centuries; nay, perhaps for ever.

All eyes are upon us. The Church and the nation are looking this way. And could oppressed and bleeding humanity understand what is passing here, millions of beseeching, imploring eyes would be turned upon us, and a wail of agonizing prayer would stir the very heavens. Let us remember, above all, that the eye of Jehovah is upon us, and in view of the tribulations of eternity, let this highest tribunal of the Methodist Episcopal Church pronounce the doom of this execrable villainy. Then, with hands washed in innocence, shall we go forth to minister at the altars of God.

*Afternoon Session.*—Bishop Scott presided. The discussion was resumed.

Father Young said that he was a good deal like the man who wished to get into the pool, but was prevented by others forestalling him. He would not inflict a long speech on the Conference. He was an old and worn out man, and did not talk much but wanted the privilege to talk a little on this subject of Slavery. A stranger would think from the speeches which have been made here, that there are two parties on this floor, anti-Slavery and pro-Slavery.—He did not believe this is the case—there is not a pro-Slavery man on this floor. [Cries of no, no.] He thought such representations calculated to do more harm than good. Slavery can never harmonize with Methodism—no more than fire and water can harmonize. They never can dwell together in unity—there will always be trouble where it is attempted to unite them. Methodism is designed to spread scriptural holiness—its great end is the evangelization of the world. It is moving on, scattering life and liberty in its

pathway. Slavery is one of the most unhallowed things in all the Lord's earth, it stands out a dreadful monster. You can never harmonize them. Methodism is just, kind, long-suffering—let it go free—free as peace on earth and good will to man, untrammelled by the influence of Slavery.

The great question before us at this time is, how to remove evil from the country and the Church. He trembled to get up and talk upon this subject, but he was aroused by a sense of duty. It is useless to spend days in attempting to prove Slavery an evil—how shall we remove it? Some say legislate it out. This is very doubtful, it would be labor in vain. It might perhaps, be done in one way, and that is, to take the position of the Friends. But this can only be done by an alteration of the Discipline. This he thought they were not prepared to do. It would inflict an injury upon some of the dearest children of God. When you try to discriminate between good and bad slaveholders, you are treading upon slippery ground. You have no means of making such a distinction. If this report be adopted, it will accomplish nothing, but will disturb our dear brethren on the border. It is not what northern brethren want, and they only take it because they can get no more. It will satisfy nobody, and will not be the means of liberating a single slave. Such legislation as the Committee propose, will not relieve the trouble.

There is a better way, and he would try to point it out. What shall be done? This inquiry had been ringing in his ears for the last fifty years. He would reply: elevate the colored people by moral and intellectual education. As soon as they are thus elevated, they cannot be kept in slavery. This is a safe and easy way. They had already been on this principle in his own State, (Ohio,) and soon would have a college where the colored man can be educated as he ought to be. This is a far better way than any legal enactments by the church. Some of the speakers had charged that we had made no progress with the Discipline as it now is. This is a mistake, we are progressing. There are now living in Cincinnati men who by their own exertions, have redeemed themselves from the bondage of slavery, who are good men, respected by all who know them, rich, and doing well. Such facts as these meet the argument, that if slaves are liberated they will be unable to take care of themselves. The colored people will do as well as any other, if they are properly educated. He had a conversation not long since with a slaveholder in Virginia in reference to sending free colored people out of that State. The man told him that there were thousands of white men he would sooner have sent out than these colored people. They are doing better than many of the whites—have built good churches, behave well, and are becoming intelligent. He believed in letting well enough alone. We are not doing as well perhaps as some could wish, but he thanked

God we are doing as well as we are. If we now throw in this fire-brand, where shall we be? Let us not forget the scenes of 1844. Let us keep together and cultivate brotherly love more and more. He would conclude with a few remarks uttered calmly, and in the fear of God. I am an old man, have been in nine General Conferences, and perhaps will never meet my brethren on this floor again. He would give them his parting advice, and that is, that lean majorities ought not to oppress strong minorities. This report, even if it should pass, would only be adopted by a small majority, and then it would give satisfaction to either party. We ought to have a great regard to those brethren who do not wish this change.— Their memorials have come to us from our great commercial emporiums—from New York, the cradle of Methodism, and the home of Emory and Garretson, and from other portions of our work. We ought to respect these petitions, and not oppress our brethren. He would advise to wait a little. The speaker concluded by offering a substitute for the report, now under consideration.

Dr. Durbin inquired whether this is offered as a substitute for the whole of the report or for that portion now under consideration; add also whether it is intended it should be incorporated in the Discipline.

Dr. Young responded that he meant it a substitute for that part of the report now under consideration, and did not design it should be incorporated in the Discipline.

Mr. Disbro of North Ohio said: I wish to explain my views more fully on the subject of Slavery as it is now presented to this Conference, and to make a conclusion to my former remarks on this subject. First of all, I desire to be right, to satisfy my own conscience, find the path of duty, then I am prepared to meet my responsibility and stand up for the right.

As a member of the Committee on Slavery, while I have no sympathy for the Minority Report, there is at the same time some things in the Minority Report to which I cannot agree. In the main it has my support, but none as a whole. I refer now more particularly to some portions of the proposed chapter. I believed then, and have not seen any thing during the discussion to change my views, that whole the proposed chapter would be rejected by the South, it would not give satisfaction to the North. It is a little too much milk and water for some of us.

1. If there is no constitutional difficulty, why not make it prohibitory and not a mere regulation. If it closes the door a little tighter to the member, it opens it wider to the minister. If the door is now closed so that no minister can hold slaves, why not extend the same to the member. I can see no difficulty in the way of bishops, presiding elders and preachers holding slaves under the new chapter, if a committee of slaveholders can be found to justify it.

2. This proposed chapter apologizes for *legal* slaveholding. It is the legal relation that gives property in man—take this away and Slavery cannot exist. If this relation may exist innocently, let the slaveholder make his own apology,—let him establish his innocence; but the church needs to make no such apology. The church has suffered what is thought to be innocent slaveholders to enter her communion, and this has been taken advantage of, by bringing in the mercenary slaveholders; but I say it to the credit of the church; that she has never before by statutory regulation defended the thing. I am tired of all such sickly apologies for the evils of Slavery. The border brethren do not thank us for it, and it placed the church in a false position to this great evil.

3. I could not have supported that chapter as a whole, and if Bro. Slicer's motion had prevailed, to make every member of the committee attach their names to the instrument, myself, with some others could not have done it, and would have presented a third report as expressive of our views. Yet the spirit that dictated and dedicated that chapter was most noble—it was an honorable desire to compromise and bring extremes together; and though I regard it a failure, the spirit that prompted it was truly Christian.

4. A portion of that chapter I endorse with all my heart. In answer to the question, what shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery? it is affirmed not only that we are as much as ever convinced of the evil of slavery, but that "all men have an equal right to freedom, that no man has a moral right to hold a fellow-being as property." This is noble, it is God's truth. It breaks on the ear like the Declaration of Independence thrown to the world by the fathers of our country. "We hold these truths as self evident, that all men are born free and equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights—among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. *No man has a right to hold a fellow-being as property.*" This glorious declaration of truth is worth more than all the rest. Put that in the Discipline, and I care but little what becomes of the balance of the chapter. The preamble to the Majority Report, and the proposition to change the general rules also receives my support.—We have a great battle to fight; and I desire to meet the issue fairly and on constitutional grounds.

1. Nothing but a change of the general rule will settle this vexed question. It has long agitated the Church. Look at the History of the Discipline, the Journals of the General and Annual Conferences, and we see this agitation. When will it cease? When Slavery is out of the Church.

2. Nothing short of this will satisfy the Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church must be a witnessing Church; she must present to the world a clear and unmistakable testimony against the evils of Slavery. Dr. Hodgson says, Methodism is Democracy

for the people, securing the largest liberty for the largest number, and I would say *liberty to all*. Providence designs that the Church shall be free from the sin of Slaveholding ; grace assures it, if the Church shall do her duty ; and God commands it. "Touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean things."

3. We may yet have to labor for this object. The introduction of the prohibitory temperance rule cost twelve years of struggle after the battle was fairly opened. Clarkson labored twenty years for the destruction of the slave trade. Let us do our duty, be faithful to the Church and humanity, and abide our time. The day will dawn at length when no human being shall be held as a slave in the Church.

Bro. Collins said that in 1836, Orange Scott had about six supporters in the General Conference ; in 1840 he had fifteen or twenty ; in 1844 the Church is seen manfully resisting the encroachments of the slave power, and the strength of Slavery was broken. The pro-Slavery Conference sloughed off, and the Church was relieved of the oppressive yoke of pro-slaveryism. In 1856, twenty-nine out of thirty-eight annual Conference ask this General Conference to make such a change in our Discipline as shall forever prevent the Church from filling up with Slavery. If all Conferences had voted on the same change we might now have the constitutional majority ; and if such men as Scott, Lee, Matlack and others had been true to us, and not turned traitors to the anti Slavery cause in the M. E. Church by dividing our strength, we should now be fully able to succeed.

4. Nothing short of an entire removal of the evil of Slavery from the Church will meet our responsibility before God ; the claims of his truth are upon us : "Undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free." I rejoice to hear Bro. Collins say, the Bible could not be appealed to in the support of Slavery.

5. This is the only ground on which we can unite the anti-Slavery strength of the Church. There is no middle ground, we must unite our strength to free the Church of our choice forever from this evil. The border brethren will be compelled yet to stand with us on this platform. The dark cloud coming over them from the Church, South, will drive them to us. The strong love and sympathy we have for them will draw them to us, while the anti-Slavery pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night standing over them as the symbol of hope, while pursued by their enemies from the pro-Slaveryism of the South, and on either hand mountain difficulties appear, and before them the impassible sea, will lead them out of the house of bondage with songs of rejoicing and triumph.

Baltimore in spirit, is now in advance of some portions of the North. The mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding States can only be extended with the diffusive spirit freedom. To build up another slaveholding Church is vain. Provi-

dence will hedge up our way, and our present position shows it can never be done.

What shall this General Conference do to extirpate the evil of Slavery? This is the great question. Will she do anything? We answer, let something be done, some advanced step be taken, or send us not back to our people. If nothing is done, our hearts shall mourn and our heads hang down as we go to the people again. Let us at least take one step. Let all be done that we have power to do to put the Church right before the world on this subject.

1. We should adopt the preamble to the Majority Report. This would be a clear declaration of anti-Slavery sentiment.

2. We should vote on a change in the general rule. Let us have a constitutional majority here, then the Annual Conference will follow our example, and in a short time the work will be complete.

3. We should adopt the first declaration of the proposed chapter. It answers the question, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of Slavery?" All men have an equal right to freedom, and no man has a moral right to hold a fellow-being as property.

4. We may interpret the present general rule so as to make our understanding of it strictly anti-Slavery. We may pass strong anti-Slavery resolutions, so as to make our records place us right before the Church. Whatever we do, let us do nothing to tighten the chains of the bondmen, nothing to increase Slavery influence among us. The captive prays, the whole heart of the Church is raised in prayer to God that this General Conference may be guided by Divine wisdom, and reach such conclusions as shall send hope to the downtrodden, save the Church from the reproach of her enemies, and secure to all her bounds, purity, peace, unity, and prosperity, evermore.

Mr. Clark, of Wyoming, said that he was in favor of a change. Had no sympathy with those memorialists who come here praying "no change." They did not propose to do anything, but contented themselves with crying, "no change." He was in favor of the report for several reasons. It proposes to exercise a just discrimination. It is founded on principle. Our position heretofore has been founded on expediency. It is also constitutional, and according to precedent. The general rules of our Church are not properly a Constitution—they have none of the distinguishing features of a Constitution. He would show them that the General Conference had not so regarded it. In eight different instances it, of itself, has made changes affecting the condition of retaining membership in the Church, and six of which vary the terms upon which persons are to be received. The speaker here quoted largely from Emory's History of Discipline, to substantiate this position. All these changes had been made by the General Conference alone, and they have acted thus in reference to everything needing change under

the spirit of the general rules, except the "peculiar institution." The report does not institute any new moral condition, other than that on which every member now rightly holds membership. The purity of the Church demands that this charge shall be made. The Church is the light of the world, and if she blinks at great moral questions, she will be guilty of a great wrong. Our Book Concerns, papers, and standard books must all be silenced on this question. Our best literature must be emancipated to prevent giving offence to the supporters of Slavery. The question had even once been asked of candidates for the ministry: Are you an Abolitionist? A great deal had been said about "old fashioned Methodism." He thought that old fashioned Methodism, like old christianity, is genuine religion; it is a creature of Providence, adapting itself to the moral wants of the world. It contains the amen of faith, the language of zeal, the glory of light and salvation, and the hallelujah of love. These elements of pure religion are unchangeable in Methodism—and circumstances must be subordinated to these—not these to circumstances. The essential morals of religion are always intolerant of circumstances.

It is also objected, "let well enough alone." Is it well enough now along our border and throughout our connexion? Is it well enough North? Is it indeed well enough South? Can we now commend ourselves to every man's enlightened conscience that we are right on this question? The great live-question is what shall be done? and the answer comes up to us, "do nothing!" The fathers have been referred to, and Asbury had been referred to as satisfied with our present course. If ever there was a condemnation by Providence of the great error of a prominent measure, there was of this, and that before the eyes of the whole world, when the whole South sloughed off as a gangrened member from a healthy body; and all as the legitimate fruits of the policy inaugurated on this question by Asbury and these very fathers. They did not educate the South right, or the great secession had not been. They are now pro slavery from head to foot. It is objected that a change will cripple the work and come in conflict with the laws of the land. They professed to be law-abiding men. Is there any statute requiring any member of our church to become a slaveholder in the sense forbidden in this chapter? But it is not asked by the border. True, but he thought it would be friendly to help them to a position where they could have a principle incorporated in their practice on this subject, and not be confined to mere silent and personal expediency; then they would be able to succeed better than they now do. If there be a discrepancy between the proposed chapter and the rule, let us do a work which can be done. Let the chapter be changed provisionally, and let the constitution be changed in the prescribed way. If it be found it does not work well, we can change it back again; at any rate there can be no harm in

trying. He should not be afraid, after fruitlessly asking the question, "what shall be done?" for so long a period, of at least making a fair trial of something that proposes a great improvement.

Dr. Hodgson obtained the floor, and after some informal propositions to adjourn, proceeded to address the Conference. He said, that notwithstanding it has been so repeatedly said that the subject before us is an important one, he feared we were in danger of overlooking it, in the strife of debate. It is a solemn moment. He had once said it was impossible to divide our church—he did not think so now. The church had divided once, she may do so again; if she does it will not be the last time, she will become familiar with it, the seeds of division will be sown thickly and they will spring up. There are two reports before us: the minority report has been called a shriveled thing. He would not speak thus contemptuously of the majority report, nor of its authors. He lived and labored in New England, and debated with abolitionists there. But he loved his brethren there, and he loves them yet. While he differed with them, he accorded to them all honesty of purpose; and yet he must object to this majority report. We cannot safely adopt it. He would state some of his objections.

1. It is self-contradictory. It affirms in strong and unqualified terms that slaveholding is sinful. Its language is: "We hold that the buying, selling, and, by inference, the holding, of a human being as property, is a sin against God." Again, "We believe that all men, by nature, have an equal right to freedom, and that no man has a moral right to hold a fellow-being as property." It also affirms that connection with Slavery is *prima facie* evidence of guilt. And yet we are told that the legal relation may be sustained innocently—that the merely legal relation is not of itself sufficient to exclude from the kingdom of grace and glory. We are told that there are two forms of Slavery, the malignant and the merely legal. What is it that constitutes Slavery, unless it be the legal relation? It is a creature of law; do away with the laws, and where is it? And yet the legal relation is said to be innocent. What is this but saying that a man has a moral right to hold a slave and has not a moral right; that slaveholding is a sin, and is not a sin; that there may be guilty and innocent slaveholding. Surely there is a most palpable contradiction in this. If it be insisted that slaveholding is invariably sinful, then it follows that a man may sin innocently. Here is a new principle in ethics—the very astute distinction between guilty sinning and innocent sinning.

2. According to the doctrine of the Report, a man may assume a forbidden, an unlawful relation to another, for the sake of conferring a benefit. If this principle be good, it will apply to other cases. A man may become a highway robber, if he rob merely for the purpose of relieving the wants of his own or some other famish-

ing family. I may marry, although I have one wife already, a poor and unprotected female for the purpose of becoming her legal protector in law, and securing her rights. Mark it, I assume the merely legal relation for the purpose of conferring a benefit. Such doctrine is evidently demoralizing in its tendency. It teaches that we can do evil that good may come—sin that grace may abound. The Apostle Paul has settled all such questions. Such teaching arrays the law of God against itself. It is assumed that no man has a moral right to hold a fellow-being as property; and yet we are told of another law—the law of love—which will permit me to do this very thing. Who is to be the judge, in this case, as to which course I shall pursue? I, myself. The act is forbidden, and yet the law of love binds me to do it.

3. This report does not secure the object at which its friends aims. It has been argued that the force of the interdiction in our general rule is found not in the buying, nor in the selling, but in the holding, &c. The report also says that, by inference, the "holding" is now forbidden. And yet it proposes to allow the holding for benevolent purposes. The report, therefore, according to its own showing, is more tolerant of Slavery than the law of the Church now is. We beg to assure brethren that we do not desire anything more favorable to Slavery than is contained in our Discipline. We do not want any more, and would be exceedingly obliged if they would withdraw the report.

4. Objects to the report further, because it proposes a judicial practice contrary to the most equitable and established maxims.—It assumes the guilt of parties, and puts them upon proof of their innocence. This is contrary to all our practice—a violation of every system of jurisprudence. Farther, the parties are to be put upon trial, not to ascertain whether the sinful act has been committed—that is supposed to be fully understood and conceded, there is *prima facie* evidence of their guilt—but ascertain whether they have sinned from right motives and for good ends—whether they be guilty sinners, or sanctified sinners. If, on the other hand, the act be not assumed to be sinful, then the parties are to be charged with guilt, and put upon their trial for acts of undetermined moral character—which may be either good or bad.

5. The report attempts what is impracticable, viz: sitting in judgment upon men's motives. Who but the great Jehovah, who knoweth the heart, can read its motives? If, however, it attempt to force a confession of motive from the accused, then it is inquisitorial. Prove me bad if you can, but do not attempt to extort from me a confession of my guilt. Besides, slaveholding is not the only act which may proceed from mercenary motives. There may even be mercenary preachers—he would not say that there are, God alone knows—but there may be. Which is the worst—a mercenary slaveholder or a mercenary preacher. Can we suppose that such

motives are less abhorrent to Jehovah in any other connection than in slaveholding. To be consistent, therefore, we must put all thus guilty upon the rack, and submit their motives to judicial inspection.

6. It requires what, according to its own principles, would not be for the good of the slave. The second answer in the chapter says :

"Whenever a member of our church, by any means, becomes the owner of a slave, it shall be the duty of the preacher in charge, to call together a committee, of at least three members, who shall investigate the case, and determine the time in which such slave shall be free, and on his refusal and neglect to abide by the decision of said committee, he shall be dealt with as in a case of immorality."

He objected to this. It is simply cruel. It is admitted that an individual may hold a slave for benevolent purposes, and yet this answer requires that even this relation shall be dissolved. He cited two instances which came to his own personal knowledge ; in the one case a gentleman was taking care of two superannuated slaves, and treating them in all respects as required by the law of love ; in the other, a gentleman came into possession of slaves by inheritance ; he offered to free them, but as that would involve their removal and separation from other members of their family, they prayed that they might remain and be his slaves.—Now, said the doctor, if these persons had been members of our church, a committee would have to be called, and a time fixed, when, notwithstanding the extenuating circumstances, such purely benevolent relation must cease. He could name multitudes of similar cases, in which the execution of this rule would be a hardship.

7. He objected to the political aspect of this report. This has probably escaped the attention of its friends. But in giving reasons for doing something—oh yes ! they must do something—the fourth is stated to be, "because the signs of the times plainly indicate that it is the duty of all good men to rally for the relief of the oppressed, and for the defense of the liberties transmitted to us by our fathers." This might do very well in a political convention, if we put the word *resolved* before it, but he doubted if it is suitable to this General Conference. We are here to aid by our deliberations in spreading scriptural holiness over these lands.—It had

been intimated that somebody is sick and required medicine; that they had something on their stomachs which they needed to have expelled; that they were willing to take almost any kind of medicine which will answer the end. If they are prepared to swallow this, he thought surely any kind of medicine would do.

The fathers have been appealed to in this debate. Their anti-Slavery lessons are adduced, and it has been alleged or insinuated that there is an opposition between their doctrines, and the rules and practices of our Church. It has been said that our fathers were backsliders. And we have been told that if Asbury could return and see the consequences of his recreancy he would shed tears. He would show that, according to our brethren, these fathers were very timid, time-serving men. Before the slave power grew rampant in the Church, these men became fearful. They cowered and receded. We have been told that it was in consequence of their action that the multitude of slaveholders came into the Church; and now, we, bold, daring men, having the principle, the nerve, the back-bone, have to stand up and repair the injuries caused by the faltering and craven spirit of our fathers.

But the Wesleyan fathers were still worse. He would show how delinquent they were. He quoted from Elliott's *History of the Great Secession*; to show the instructions which the Wesleyan Conference gave to their missionaries in Jamaica:

"As in the Colonies in which you are called to labor, a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the Committee most strongly call to your recollection what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted as Missionary to the West Indies, that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without, in the least degree, in public or in private, interfering with their civil condition."  
[P. 832.]

These were the instructions, written by Watson himself. But what about slaveholders. He would quote again to show:

"A meeting of the Wesleyan Missionaries and leaders of Jamaica, convened by the Chairman of the District on the 10th of May, uttered their protest, in eight resolutions. The

number of Missionaries was seventeen, and four hundred and forty-six leaders. They state that nearly all the leaders were respectable persons, the most of whom were owners of slaves ; that the report is a gross calumny and falsehood." [P. 22.]

Compare the above with the following :

"It is enforced upon you that you continue no person as a member of your Societies whose 'conversation is not as becometh the Gospel of Christ.' That any member who may relapse into his former habits, and become a polygamist, or an adulterer ; who shall be idle and disorderly, disobedient to his owner—if a slave—who shall steal, or be in any other way immoral or irreligious, shall be put away, after due admonition, and proper efforts to reclaim him from the 'error of his ways.'" [P. 832]

It would be perceived that when these men came to look at Slavery practically, they dealt with it just as our fathers did, and as we now do. He would call attention to another passage :

"A brief survey of the singular circumstances by which Divine Providence has been pleased to work in introducing Methodism among the slaves and free people of color in the West Indies, will be the theme of our first chapter.

"Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert, Speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua, about 1758, visited England for the benefit of his health. While on this visit he was truly converted to God through the instrumentality of Mr. Wesley. On his return to Antigua, 1760, he commenced his religious services by collecting a few persons in his own home, with whom he first prayed, and then exhorted them. His hearers soon increased, as his singular conduct awakened the curiosity of the principal inhabitants through the island, to see and hear for themselves. The work soon extended to the slaves, so that two hundred were formed into Methodist societies in a short time. His was the first introduction of the Gospel, as taught by Mr. Wesley among the inhabitants of the torrid zone. Mr. Gilbert's death left the society in a destitute condition. Some turned to their ways ; others grew weary in well-doing ; some were satisfied with a name, while their souls were dead ; but some continued steadfast. These were much aided by two black women, who met them regularly and prayed with them.

"These two females mentioned above, were the slaves of Mr. Gilbert ; so that they and their masters were the principal instruments of introducing evangelical religion into the West Indies, both among the slaves and their masters."

This fact is worth special notice. We are told that we are growing worse, and yet we are pursuing just the policy they pursued. Men have gone over to Jamaica and proclaimed the colored people there as fine a body of peasantry as the world could produce. It is thus proved conclusively, that things did not grow worse in Jamaica under this practice. No one could deny that Watson was a strong anti-slavery man, but this was his practice.

The Scripture argument has been referred to. It was intimated that speakers in favor of the Minority had dragged it in. Bro. Dodge was the first to introduce in. One of the objects for which he quoted Scripture seemed to be to show that the slaveholders of the border conferences were very devout and yet very wicked men. They fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Sir, I do not believe that they are all of this description. He had one thing to say in this connection, and he would say it by the grace of God. He had heard with pain these protests against going to the Scripture to settle questions of ethics. He always goes to the Bible first. If the Bible says nothing on the subject, he must of course go somewhere else. If the Bible settles the question, it is settled. No man need attempt to warn him away from it. He will follow the Bible, no matter where it may lead him. If he comes to a conclusion which another brother considers dishonoring to the character of God, and that brother declares that he has too much respect for his God to vindicate him, he would say to him, you may do as you please. He had his theory on this subject, but he did not choose to advance it at this time. He simply wished to glance at some of the invincible Scripture arguments which had been advanced during this discussion. We are shown here that by the Mosaic code, a slave was not compelled to go back to his master, and yet Dr. Thomson tells us that the Gospel code sends a free man back. The apostle wanted to employ him, and yet he could not do it, though he was a—free man. This, according to the Dr., is the progress which the Gospel makes. He need not stop to show the fallacy of such reasoning.

He closed by saying, we are in the midst of perilous times. The outside pressure has been spoken of; he knows it is great, and we are in danger of being borne down by it. Be careful of making changes now, we do not know what will be the consequences. There is danger. The eyes of the world are upon us, it is said; ah, yes! two sets of eyes are glaring fearfully upon us—the eyes of the great political parties. Would to God they would leave us alone, to prosecute our own appropriate work. When the church was weak, politicians cared but little for her; but now she has grown strong, each is eager to make her its tool. If the church turns aside, she will become weak, like Sampson. Her eyes will be put out. She will be shorn of her strength; and when she feels for the pillars of Heathenism, she will be unable to pull them down. He would be ashamed of his brethren, if he thought they had not grace enough in their hearts to let political parties alone, and pursue their one great work of saving souls. May God deliver us, in this our time of need! All that we can do is to pray that God may guide, and with this prayer, he would close

Mr. Dempster said:

MR. PRESIDENT:—The reduced state of my strength, of which fever has almost utterly deprived me, will compel me to compass my few thoughts within the smallest compass of words. My aim will be: First, to identify the character of Slavery, which the report proposes to remove from our church. Slavery proper, cannot imply something apart from the intentions and acts of the master, or from that coercive control in whose grasp the slave is a tool. It cannot claim to participate in both good and evil, so as to be susceptible of either a useful or perverted application. It is not that which the force of events can change or modify, as though it were of a mixed nature. It can pass no mutation, but by *destruction*—can have no altered relations, but by perishing.

The evils of slavery have been referred to the *abuse* of the system of Slavery. Were the reference correct, the system would be good; as when evil arises from the perversion of principles, good is their legitimate operation. Christianity, in its perverted application, has crowded dungeons with confessors, and fed the flames with martyrs. In its legitimate application, the reverse must forever be its workings. So,

if Slavery has only wrought evil to the extent of its perversion, its excellencies need sustaining by no better evidence. But is it impossible to abuse a system so far as it is only evil? Let us test Slavery by this rule, at a single point. Beyond all question, Slavery divests its victims of every shadow of liberty, personal, domestic and civil. It abolishes his right to the appropriation of his faculties—his right to his wife, his children, and to citizenship. What then, has it left him? Life? But does this wholesale robbery leave life any longer a boon? He has been plundered of all that last right of created mind—the right to himself—and, by losing this, he has lost all else which this comprehended—all which has been given from heaven—all which lay within the range of human acquisition on earth. It is true, a few scattered beams of original truth may pierce that gloom which is indispensable to his continued thralldom; but those rather disclose his calamity, than administer relief.—He is shut out from the very God that made him, by unavoidable ignorance of his revealed word—he is cut off from all communications with him through his speaking works. The light in which these can be read would show the unendurable horrors of his thralldom: it must, therefore, be shut out from his soul—What more has he to lose? Not his wife—she is torn from him, and dragged with shrieks to distant bondage. Not his children, bathed in tears, they are hurried away by a new master to another State. Not his own faculties; these his master has appropriated, and they must be so applied under the power of the lash.

There is no future within the limits of life on which kindled hope can cast a beam.—Has not Slavery consummated its ruin by its own legitimate workings? Is there one green spot in his desert life which it has not blighted?

The propriatory principle, binding society in union, lies dead, and in ruin in his soul. His master has usurped his Maker's throne—has made him property—a chattel, like the beast with which he toils—a thing, like the soil he digs—like the clod on which he treads. What, then, remains for him to fear, but the curse of protracted being? what to hope, but the utter unconsciousness of what he now is? What other language can the wild scream of his completed degradation utter, but that of defiance to all authority, and all agents, to add another drop of agony to his overflowing cup?

Let the inquiry be pressed with the deepest emphasis, whether any abuse of the system can make it worse? Whether it be possible to *rob a man of more than himself*? You ask, then, is not half starving a slave making his condition worse than to be well fed? Is not 20 lashes a day worse than an unwounded back? True; but does not Slavery authorize both these? Though they are abuses of the slave, they are not abuses of the system. Does not this fully authorize the master to so treat his slave, if he judges it for his interest? Is it alleged that, it being against his interest, the slave has an indemnity against it? But how readily does interest yield to passion? Does not the system expose the slave to become the victim of it? Well sir, would it be for our humanity, were interest—even perverted to selfishness—the paramount force acting on society. There is a more wasting agency in the fiery gust of passion. Whether this raves in revenge or lust, wo to the defenceless victim of its fury.

Ah, sir, there is a sense in which a person can be robbed of more than herself, her master may make her not his property only. He may outrage those delicate instincts which God has planted deepest in woman's mysterious nature. The daughter of the noble Roman found a deliverer from the brutal lust of lawless power in her father's hand, which fastened a javelin in her heart to prevent her purity from being spotted. But who shall protect from brutal pollution the enslaved negress? She is property, she must be appropriated, she must be an unresisting victim of that polluting act for which, by another woman, death would be a just infliction. But is this shocking crush of all that is most lovely in human form, of what the laws of men and the laws of God have continued to guard as forever inviolate, is this in the control of the master's passion, by the very law of that property which he has in his slave?

More than this, sir, if more can be, the right of life and death by this law of property, belongs to the master. This right was recognized by the Roman law, legitimately so. But the advocate of the system urges the amiable humanity of many a slaveholder; that he treats his servants like children, that he allows them scope for self-directing power, that they have all the liberty of which their faculties will admit. But what is proved by the truth of this allegation? Not that this kindness is the fruit of the system, but that it is in spite

of it ; that it is directly opposite to its legitimate workings.

The master's clemency, therefore, is an additional light, revealing the horrors of Slavery against which it antagonizes. So far as opposing principles neutralize Slavery, they cannot certainly be urged in its favor. Their tendency is its *abolition*, not its eulogy.

Many of the Pagans were adorned with brighter characters than the gods they adore ; but this was not in consequence of polytheism, but in spite of it. So of the parental supervision of kind hearted masters ; it cannot be extorted from Slavery, but is in the face of it.

All action, at odds with a malignant principle, is good. All in harmony with such a principle, is evil. All mitigation of Slavery is not referable to it, but to its opposite. As such antagonisms may be strong enough to vanquish its principles, its forms may exist in the absence of its principles, its form may exist in the absence of its principles. But as the presence of its form strongly indicates the presence of its principles, the legal holder cannot be held innocent, but on the proof that, while he sustains the legal relation, he abandons the principles which that relation authorizes.

In the light of all truth then, Slavery must be pronounced a sin against God and against humanity ; a sin to be classed with theft, robbing, falsehood, swearing and licentiousness. If those guilty of any of this class can be admitted to the sacraments of the Church, those guilty of all should be. Why not ? The Scriptures class these together. " But the Christian holds the slave for his good." Let him give the Church evidence of this, and she should continue him in her bosom. But his affirmation is not evidence ; on two accounts he may misjudge of the slave's interest ; he may be warped in his statements by his own interests.

As the legal form of Slavery authorizes the application of its malignant principles, the Church justly answers this application in the practice of that form. If this be so, does it not devolve on the legal slaveholder to make proof that he is *not such morally* ?

If he stands in the legal relation which authorizes the practice of the guilty principles, must he not prove to the Church his freedom from the latter ? Supposing my neighbor's horse is found in my custody, would it devolve on him to prove my guilt, or on me to show my innocence ? Would

not the facts that the horse was taken clandestinely, and is found in my possession, be *prima facie* evidence of my guilt? Would it not justify my apprehension and confinement for trial?

Sir, do you assert that one must be assumed innocent till he is found guilty? True; but there is some evidence of my guilt; enough to demand counter evidence from me; and until I produce it the suspicion will justly lie against me. The instant I prove that I rescued the animal from the thief, and that I retained it only to safely restore it to its owner, I have proved my innocence. Thus *prima facie* evidence of guilt demands of the suspected that counter evidence, which can be required of no unsuspected man. If then, this *prima facie* evidence, in the supposed case, is a demand on me to produce counter evidence, the legal relations of Slavery demands counter evidence of the slaveholder. For slaveholding is a crime, its formal existence indicates the presence and operation of its malignant principles. Nothing, therefore, but the abandonment of these principles, as seen in the light of evidence, can invalidate the inference of guilt.

But as the Apostolic Church is claimed to have admitted unqualified slaveholding, we hasten to examine the proof of this question. As accurate definition often supercedes protracted discussion, it is especially demanded on the question of Slavery in the Apostolic Church. At the outset we assume what will be conceded, viz: That what is called Slavery is capable of existing in two forms, in that of mere legal relation, not containing the principles essential to the system; and in that relation embracing those principles.—Thus, a master may treat his legal slave as a “brother beloved,” by which every principle of Slavery is neutralized, and nothing but its unmeaning form remains. In this case only the legal form, and none of the malignant principles are present. The institution exists only in name, not in substance. The *form* is present, the *thing* is absent. The thing is the slave’s loss of all his rights, even of self-ownership. The legal form leaves him really invested with his rights, and only nominally belonging to his master. The latter may involve no sin; the former can involve nothing but sin. The one has every element essential to the system of Slavery, the other has not one of those elements.—Now, which of these did the Apostles admit into the Church? Was it slavery both in

its form and malignant principles?—Then we demand why? You answer that the Christianity inculcated in the Church might more effectually abolish the principles of Slavery. In other words, there can be no mode of removing sin so effectual from the world as by taking it in the Church. This then is the position of the advocates for Slavery in our Church. This then is the position of the advocates for Slavery in our Church. Now let the principle be fairly tested. If it applies to the sin of Slavery, let them inform us why it does not apply to all sins—to theft, robbery, lewdness, drunkenness, and the entire list of sins excluding men from God's kingdom. At this point we must irresistibly press them. The question must be distinctly answered, why take this sin into the Church to cure it, and not all sins? Doubtless, the debauchee would, in the Church, be encompassed with influences far more favorable to his reform than in the brothel. Why not permit him to alternate between the bed of pollution and the table of the Lord? Why not reform the highway robber in the same manner? The Church is more favorable to that end than the banditti. Do you allege that the cases are not parallel? Then the robber's is less aggravating. He has filched your purse, but permitted you to escape in possession of your other rights. The slaveholder has filched your ownership in yourself, and thereby left no right possible. Why should not the robber, the less guilty, be admitted to equal advantages? If the Church can best remove the evil of Slavery by having it in its bosom, the same reason should put all other sins there. Would this make the Church one vast receptacle of all that degrades humanity? But this is simply the application of the principle; will its advocates show us why it admits of application in one case and not in all others of the same kind? They cannot be allowed to apply it in this case, and reject in all similar cases without reasons of great codency. The brief conclusion then, which forces itself upon us is this, either Slavery including its essential principles is no sin, or it was never admitted by the Apostles into the Church, or the Church should admit men into it practicing all kinds of sin. The first, that Slavery, including all its malignant principles, is not a sin, not one present will affirm. The third, that sinners of every kind and degree, should be admitted into the Church is just as universally rejected. But are such aware

that the rejection of these two compels the adoption of the other? That if they believe chattelizing Slavery is a sin, and that sinners of all kinds should not be admitted to the Church, they cannot believe that the Apostles admitted chattelizing slaveholders to the Church.

But it has been urged "that Slavery was a peculiar evil, which had for ages been legalized; that it then formed an integral part of the civil institutions of the empire, and that the Apostles were left to grapple as best they could with this ancient, social evil." But was not this equally so with polytheism and other corrupt institutions of Pagan empires? Did the Apostles ever recognize the authority of law when it enjoined the observance of what was degrading in these institutions? Did Daniel, the three Hebrews, or Moses, who were protected by miracle in disobeying laws in conflict with those of God? Did Peter and his brethren, when they bade the national council to judge whether God's ministers should obey them or Him, when their commands were in conflict with his? Indeed to have admitted men to the Church, who committed merely legalized sin would have crowded it with most of the pollutions of antiquity. While they intermeddled with no institutions in their civil aspects, they were silent on no evil in its moral aspect.

When the evil was such that its moral character could be removed, and its civil form remain, they vanquished the evil and spared the form in which it had been bodied forth. But when, from nature of the thing, both must stand or fall, they never hesitated—never deemed a law a bar to action; they marched right forward to an open attack. Of this class was polytheism, which they left not secure on the throne of the Caesars. Of the other class was Slavery, whose lifeless form could surmise those malignant principles which had formed its contents. These they subverted, that they left undisturbed.

It is therefore impossible that the legality of Slavery should, in their view, have mitigated its sinfulness. They must have insisted on the utter rejection of all its principles on the part of every slaveholder admitted to the Church, or they would have sanctioned a principle which would crowd the Church with sinners of every type.

Now, sir, in the midst of this light which so unmistakeably

reveals the harmlessness of apostolic Slavery, how shall we apologize for malignant Slavery in our Church ?

It amazes me especially, sir, that in those eloquent utterances which in '44 rang through the Conference hall against slavery in a minister, in a Bishop—which plead for its extinction there, at the hazard of rending the whole Church—that those same utterances should now be heard for the continuance of Slavery in our own membership. Do those eloquent brethren imagine that it was wrong in a minister to deprive a man of all his rights, but wrong in a member to do so ? That the accident of office could give character to that which God, through all his utterances in the universe, has pronounced guilty. For the honor of the head and heart we beg these brethren, if there be evidence within the precincts of thought, to show the minister guilty of crushing his neighbor's rights, and the member innocent for doing the same thing, to adduce that evidence. It is not all the truth that this is not so in fact—it is not so by possibility. No tribunal in the world can make it so.

No, sir, right lies beyond the sphere of power, though that power be omnipotent. Were it not so, will could originate right and wrong, and the unbeginning moral attributes of God's character would be out the universe.

It is the agent to which a moral act is related, and to his office. Do you allege, sir, that the minister's example, pervading a large surface of society is more widely ruinous. Then, by comparison, you concede the fact of both, but perpetrate the huge fallacy of supposing the evil to be in its effects, and not that which produced them, as though nothing could produce evil effects. The conclusion is resistless, then, that what works moral evil is intrinsically so itself. I submit it then, sir, to these honored brethren, if their cause be not a hard one, to plead in moving strains in 1844, against an evil intrinsically the same for which, in 1856, they tax their noblest powers ? They surely cannot allege, as a sound, that it was because the Discipline happened to make this arbitrary distinction. On deeper reflection they must feel the undefined conviction that "it is hard to kick against the pricks." But, sir, I know the sway of combined events, and look with unfeigned tenderness on these erring, best of men.

But, sir, my exhausted strength—which a sick bed has just reduced to its minimum—premonishes me to hasten to—

ward a conclusion after a hasty glance at the constitutional question. This, lying within a narrow compass, may be adjusted without waste of words. What is there then, sir, in the general rule with which the proposed chapter in the majority Report is in conflict? The chapters in the first and second answers in resolution second, proposes to terminate Slavery in our Church. Now with what is this in conflict in the rule? The rule employs two classes of terms—the one *general*, the other *particular*. It employs two words. The first class of terms is found in these words, “avoiding evil of every kind.” The second of these, “buying or selling men, women and children, with the intention to enslave them. The connecting words are “such as.” It is true these connecting words are but once used; but as it is palpable to all that they would connect the general term with every specification in the rule, were the elipses supplied, their force is recognized at every step. The language of the rule is then avoiding evil of every kind, such as buying and selling, &c., &c.

Now if there be evil of any other form of Slavery, as the general terms recognizes every evil of it, it must be included with these two here expressed. Why must they, sir? Because it is an element of evil of every kind, and the avoidance of this is expressly required. Because it is such as these two expressly prohibited. Is not that in the proposed charge viz: the prohibition of slaveholding in the church, is not this slaveholding of the exact moral character of buying with an intention to enslave? Observe, sir, it is not buying or selling that the rule prohibits. What is it then? “The intention to enslave?” Well, sir, I inherit a slave and hold him in Slavery, have I in this an intention to enslave? Most certainly. Is not this then the identical thing which the rule forbids? Is not this all that the proposed chapter forbids? Can they be out of harmony? Is not the guilty element just the same in one who holds the inherited slave as property as in him who sells the victim as such? Such a doubt this must show the moral incongruity in the two things—that my holding property in a man is not like enabling another to do it—that holding him as a slave myself just as my neighbor would do it, is a still a very unlike thing to doing it—that intending to hold him as a chattel and intending to sell him as a chattel, occupy in ethics by no means

the same sphere. Now, sir, if this distinction is a dream, and the acts are two only in name, then how can the chapter which forbids the one be repugnant to the rule which forbids the other?

Now, sir, it is hoped none will confound the particulars expressed under this general rule, with exhaustive specifications which are intended to express every species which is contained in the genus. For the reasons just submitted, they can be intended merely as specimens, and therefore leave the fullest scope to include everything like them. But, sir, here I must abruptly terminate these thoughts in the cherished hope, that before this topic shall be dismissed, a door may open to pursue them farther.

#### TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

Conference met at the usual hour, Bishop Simpson in the chair. The religious services were conducted by Mr. Wakefield. The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Munroe moved that the report of the majority of the Committee on Slavery be taken up.

Mr. Sanderson moved to lay the motion on the table.—Lost.

The motion of Mr. Munroe prevailed.

Bishop Baker announced the following committee on the report of the Trustees of the Chartered Fund, viz: Messrs. Hodgson, Osbon, Wilmer, Wood, and Webster.

The discussion on Slavery was resumed.

Mr. Finley addressed the Conference, and remarked that he wished to define his position, and he charged the reporter to be careful to put down his speech, as he wanted what he said to go out to the world as his last will and testament.—The question before us is called the question on Slavery, but before we come to this point he would ask the privilege of defining what he meant by Slavery. He did not understand that the man who owned two or three worn out negroes was a slaveholder—a man who has raised his servants, fed and clothed and kept them, and made his will and keeps them till he dies, and then frees them is not a slaveholder. The man who holds slaves and gives them the fruit of their labor is not a slaveholder. But Mr. F. said he would not detain the Convention by telling them what Slavery was not. He would leave the negative and advocate the positive views of

the question, and show what Slavery was. He remarked that it was the tyrannical usurpation of power of one man over another to crush his soul and hold him body and soul for gain. Put that down, said Mr. F., (addressing the reporter,) and underscore every word. This Slavery destroys the free agency of man, and exercises a power which God himself does not exercise over man. Besides, said he, it makes war against the attributes of God—against his justice—against his mercy, and against the whole nature of the Deity. Mark, said he, this kind of slavery makes war against the attributes of God. He requires of every man to “do justly, love mercy and walk humbly.” It requires love to man, and this kind of slavery begets a hatred cruel as the grave. He would ask the General Conference and every man if it is not making war against God to crush a man in his soul and body, and convert him into a mere brute? He had no doubt if this principle of rebellion against God, and cruelty to man, had the power, it would dethrone *Jehova* himself. He spoke what he firmly believed, and he spoke fearlessly when he uttered these sentiments. As it hurls defiance at the Almighty, he believed if there was a God in Heaven he would arrest this frightful evil. The Bible is against this Slavery, and the whole economy of God’s grace is opposed to it. Religion is opposed to it, and when a man is converted, and the spirit of God is breathed into his soul, his whole nature revolts at the crime. No man can love God and hate his fellow man. The Methodist Church was opposed to this mercenary system, or he had failed to understand its doctrines and discipline, after studying them as traveling preacher now for nearly half a century. They teach that slavery is a sin, a great sin, and there is not a minister in all her pale that dare assert to the contrary, and affirm that slavery is not a sin. This was the universal conviction of the Methodist Episcopal Church on that subject. A system that brutalizes and turns into chattells, men, women and children; that separates the husband from his wife, and the mother from her child, and treats them as horses, mules, and oxen, no man can say is not a sin. There is not a member of the Church, North or South, but what will write in his testimony, and say that slavery is a sin. They cannot possibly come to any other conclusion.

All know that the Discipline of the Church teaches that

it is sin, and if it does not teach so it ought to teach it, and teach it clearly and explicitly, and all ought to know that it does so teach. We have a test of membership in the Discipline that covers all the ground, and we see no reason for any analytical dissertations about this and that and the other thing. The Discipline makes but one, and that is so plain and clear and explicit, all can understand it. It reads thus, "There is but one condition previously required of those who desire admission into our society, namely, a desire to flee the wrath to come, and be saved from their sins." There is no necessity of making any other test—whoever forsakes his sins is eligible to membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and no other can find admission. No Methodist preacher or General Conference has any right to make any other. God himself has set it up, and none dare pull it down. He wanted to see the man who would dare to put forth his hand to pull down that standard of God Almighty. Such slavery as he had spoken of could not find admission into the Church, because it was a sin against God and man, and makes an effort to deliver the slave treason. Slavery makes it treason to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and help the oppressed. God commands these duties, and yet slavery lays its bloody hand upon God's command. There never was a better name given to slavery than that given by Wesley, "the consummate sum of all villainies under heaven." So much for the nature of Slavery. The Bible is against it; the whole Discipline of the Church is against it; and I, said Mr. S., with great emphasis, am against it now and forever. He would utter his denunciation against this vile abomination at every hazard, and bear his testimony before God and the world. There were thousands wanting to know what old man Finley was going to say. The doctrines I have preached I obtained from my Bible, and I am witness of their truth. Some of the brethren have much to say about going South and preaching the Gospel. If they would go there on any other platform than the Discipline of the Church, they would not be allowed long to exercise their ministry. But such can go if you go as ministers of Christ, untrammelled with any tests not known to the New Testament.

The great commission must not be circumscribed, "Go in to all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Are there not scores, and hundreds, and thousands in the South that are not slaveholders ; and are they to be deprived of the Gospel ? Will any say that these should be left ? If any are here, I call them out and ask them to shew themselves. They dare not do it. If they did lift a hand to interdict the Gospel, I would put a patch on their back, and brand them as traitors to Christ.—If God calls us to die for his Gospel's sake, let us die like martyrs, but not hedge up our own ways.

As we have a test of membership, what is the necessity of making another, and if any other is found to be absolutely necessary let it be something like this. It is the sense of this General Conference that no sinner without repentance and reformation is eligible to membership in the Church. This would apply to all sinners whether those guilty of negro stealing or stealing horses or cattle. If such repent and restore the stolen things they may be admitted, but not till then. With evidence of reformation they may be taken in on a trial of six months. We dont, said Mr. F, take in members by the wholesale. When I joined the church a Discipline was put in my hands and I read It. He had, he said, read an old quaker book which justified shouting, when the preacher asked him if he was satisfied with the doctrines and discipline of the church, he answered in the affirmative, and he was admitted into full connection. He had been very wicked. They called him the New Market devil, because he whipped every man that would not behave himself. When he was converted and prayed to God for grace and strength, the fighting propensity was taken out of his heart, though some little he feared lingered yet. He remarked that it was time all this legislating about new test had come to an end. The law of Jesus Christ has a finality on this subject. The General Conference could not make any, and they ought not to seek to make any and never will make any.

He would vote for such a resolution as that which shuts the door of the Church against every man that lives in open violation of the laws of God. That would not injure his brethren of the Baltimore Conference, but he saw no necessity for this, as we have the test already. God has put up the bars of the Church against all impenitent sinners, and no man dare pull them down. What he requires none can dispense with, and what he does not require none may enjoin.

Our old friend, Dr. Dempster, had much to say about the general rules, but in all his speculations he never touched the question. Mr. F. said he would be a little analytic, and he wished the brethren to look at their discipline.

There is only one condition, mark it only one condition, required of all who desire membership in the Church. Now apply this rule. If any man buys, or sells, or chases runaway negroes and holds them for sordid ends alone, he cannot be admitted, because that one condition stands in his way. He would ask if there was any Dr. of Divinity here that would take such sinners into the church. I see one said Mr. F., but he shakes his head. No, he must repeat and reform if he gets into the church. There is only one condition and the General Conference dare not alter, and they will not alter it.

To be sure there are other conditions to prove that the man admitted is working out his salvation. His character is to be shown by his fruits, and whenever the one condition is complied with, it will show itself by doing no harm, avoiding evil of every kind, especially that most generally practiced, such as profane swearing, Sabbath breaking, drunkenness, buying and selling men, women and children, not with the intention to free them, but to enslave them. These are consequences resulting from the condition required. Does any one want any thing stronger?

Here some one said yes.

Well, said Mr. F., I cant go with you. I stand upon the platform of the Church and the Bible. He was a patriot, and never swerved from devotion to his country—a republican, and from principle. The last thing he would give up would be his liberty as a man and as a christian. That he would never give up, but standing on his platform he would contend to the last. He had not gone to any caucus to confer with his brethren. What he said, his judgment and conscience approved, and there by the help of God, he would stand. He owed a debt of gratitude to the Bishops, and hoped they would stand on the old platform as long as they lived. Some men had given them side shots. They stood between two fires, and if they were not morally courageous they would retreat; but he had confidence to believe that they would be firm unto the end, in standing by the discipline of the Church, maintaining its integrity.

These principles of liberty, said Mr. F., were taught me by my venerable father, who was a minister, and fought for liberty in the Revolutionary War, and by my patriotic mother, who lost all her brothers fighting for liberty, and by the grace of God I never will disgrace them.

Mr. Cunningham then rose and addressed the Conference :

Mr. PRESIDENT : It would be little less than folly for me to assume coolness in the circumstances in which I find myself. I feel considerable trepidation, but I am confident in the justness of my cause. I would be recreant to the interests confided in me, in common with my colleagues, were I not to give my influence to dam back the flood of oppression which brethren would abruptly roll upon us. The course of this debate, and the arguments employed, show that the Church is not prepared for the action contemplated by the majority report.

The vast results which its passage must involve, convince me that its friends have not comprehended its import. The occasion that calls for such a measure ought to be clear beyond doubt ; and the arguments ought to be as strong as Holy Writ.

We have, on the contrary, been met with misrepresentation, rant and nonsense. You object to the word ! I am a plain man. I call things, as far as possible, by their right names. I give you proof of my assertions.

1. One speaker, in reply to Brother Coombe's argument, assumed that his approbation extended to the whole report. The truth is, he took hold of certain independent propositions, that do not depend upon what precedes or follows for their meaning. And he triumphantly proved that the Majority Report defeats itself by its own necessary admissions.

2. I remind you of inconsistencies in argument. In the majority report it is contended that the administration of Discipline in slave territory, exceeds the letter of the law ; that the new chapter is only intended to raise the letter to an equality with the practice. But when we meet them with the argument of unconstitutionality, they change their ground, and contend that the general rule forbids slaveholding, thus proving, if they prove anything, that our practice in the administration of Discipline exceeds, and at the same time falls below the letter of the law.

Of Dr. Dempster's mental power I had formed a high

opinion, but his construction of the general rule has entirely revolutionized my opinion.

The arguments by which he attempted to prove that the general rule forbids the holding, as well as the buying and selling of slaves, amount to an attenuated nothing, and fail to serve their intended purpose.

The things intended to be prohibited by these general rules are distinctly specified and do not appear as mere representatives of several classes.

If Mr. D. had been employed to write a rule to include what he contends is embraced in the present one, he would doubtless express himself in very different terms. This construction of the general rule is an after thought. It had its birth in the Slavery Committee or on this Conference floor. I have been a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for twenty-six years, and am now in the twenty-third year of my itinerancy, and I never heard of this interpretation until I came to this General Conference. Absurd as it is, it became necessary to assume and maintain it in order to justify the Report of the Majority. The Report says, "If a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by any means becomes the owner of a slave, it shall be the duty of the preacher in charge, to call together a committee," &c. This provision is simply ridiculous. The members of the Methodist Episcopal Church neither buy nor sell, but as a general thing become owners of slaves by natural increase. In such case it would become the duty of the preacher in charge to interfere, and he would certainly have his hands full of business.

But it is asked in reference to the Report, is it true? is it right? I answer, the argument does not turn upon abstract questions of truth and right, but upon the application of a great principle. A principle may, in the abstract be both true and right, but unjust and injurious in its application. Surgery is a truth. The practice of surgery is right, but circumstances must determine when and how the principle is to be applied. Leaving, then out of the question the right or wrong of the doctrines of this new chapter, the circumstances of our Church are not such as to justify their application.

In all our border work we stand committed to anti-slavery principles, and our Church is exerting an influence that depends upon our Discipline remaining as it is.

Brethren plead their conscience. Has it come to this; that other men's conscience must be the rule of our religion and morals?—Must this power, like an irresponsible autocrat, rule in this matter?

"Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth."

Some of the greatest wrongs ever committed among men were done under the plea of conscience. Saul was conscientious when consenting to the death of Stephen. He claims to have acted in all good conscience. Conscience is not always educated by high moral sentiment. Circumstances of birth and education have much to do in the formation of conscience; a man born in the midst of Slavery, and one raised entirely free from its influence may possess different consciences, without blame on the one hand, or praise on the other.

No writer on Mental Philosophy has ever been able to trace the line where reason ends and *mania* begins. The law of our mental constitution is such, that the mind, directed to any one thing for a considerable length of time became insane on that point. Thenceforward reason is out of the question. Our brethren who are pressing us may make their own inference. The South also, do you say? Our circumstances are different. We look over the whole ground—we are not men of one idea.

Again, our Church is not represented here on this subject. We have before us petitions signed by four thousand members of our Church, asking that something may be done with the question of Slavery; but, sir, there are seven hundred thousand whose wishes are not represented.

I have no doubt, but three-fourths of our entire membership desire the discipline to remain as it is. You question? Be it so.—I have a right to my opinion, and you may adopt it or not as you please. There are brethren here who are going right in the face of their congregations.

Our position, Mr. President, is exceedingly anomalous. We are here in defence of the Church; we are here attempting to save her from ruin. And, sir, against whom do we contend? The powers of Popedom? The powers of infidelity? Would to God it were so. No, sir, the enemies of the Church's peace who here assail are her own ministers!

Who are the real agitators? Who have been instrumental in raising this anti-slavery furor of which brethren speak? Not the members of the Church, but its ministers.

If brethren had said to their people what has been conceded in the Majority Report, this excitement of which they speak would not have existed.

I was utterly astounded by an attempt on the part of a speaker to draw a parallel between the relative position of preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church North, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

The one pleads that slavery is a Divine institution; the other

denies. The one denies no position in the Church to slaveholders; the other makes exceptions. The one carries a discipline that permits slavery without hindrance; the other carries a discipline that declares it to be a great evil. The one allows buying and selling; the other forbids both. What has become of the parallel?

Our position is demanded by humanity. The only testimony borne against Slavery in slave territory, is borne by the Methodist Episcopal Church. And if the Methodist Episcopal Church is any where a pillar of a cloud by day and a fire by night, it is such in our slave territory.

I advertise, brethren, that we intend to preach the Gospel to both slave and master, do what you will. For this we have precedent.

Four years ago, when the proposition to rescind the rule against pewed churches was under consideration, a brother now on this floor, remarked in substance, "Brethren, you may do as you please, it makes no difference to us, we have our custom, and we mean to abide by it." You will not drive us out of slave territory, or bind us by any rule unapproved by our conscience.

Abel Stevens addressed the Conference as follows :

MR. PRESIDENT AND BRETHREN : It is with reluctance that I dissent from any measure, however illegitimate, that assails slavery—an evil so infinite in all enormity that any extravagance of hostility to it, is pardonable—more pardonable, at least, because more humane and generous, than any cautious, calculating indifference.—But the document before us presents fundamental difficulties. It challenges me from my old positions—positions which I have maintained as a Methodist preacher and a Methodist editor for nearly twenty years. My fidelity to the Church, my fidelity to the slave, require me to oppose it, not that it may be defeated, but amended, or substituted by something better.

Brethren who favor the document will testify that I have endeavored to avoid this open opposition by every earnest and honorable attempt to get the report modified before its introduction here.—I have plead with those who could control it, to relieve it of the constitutional defect, which confronts you on its very face; other delegates, good and true anti-slavery men, have joined in this entreaty; many of my old associates of the East—the men who fought the battles of this cause before most of the anti-slavery delegations present, deigned to hail its standard, have acknowledged the urgent propriety, if not necessity, of this change, but in vain; and I, with those who think with me, are shut up to the necessity of violating, as we believe, the Constitution of the Church, or of resisting this measure till at least it can be safely and constitutionally provided.

I am the more reluctant in this opposition, because the document presents so many excellent features. Notwithstanding its exceeding

critical defects, arising, doubtless, from frequent changes in the Committee, yet wherever it is read, in the homes of our people, in the cities of the east, or the log cabin villages of the far west—it will be pronounced a noble, a christian-like testimony—worthy of this great body, worthy of us all, but too worthy to be unworthily enacted. There is no man here, from the “border,” or from the North, who does not pray and long for the time when its provisions shall become historical facts, throughout the Church and throughout the land. And that wish inspires, I trust, all the solicitude here felt, that it may not be illegitimately and disastrously pressed upon us.

The main points involved in this constitutional question are these :

First : We have a series of terms of membership, called the “General Rules,” which are a part of the constitutional law of the Church, and one of which prohibits “the buying or selling of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them.”

Second : The Report before us, proposes, as we allege, to make non-slaveholding a term of membership, and would thereby violate not only the existing general rule which prohibits only the “buying and selling” of slaves, but also the “restrictive,” by rejecting the only authorized process for such a change. It is, therefore, a double assau't upon the Constitution of the Church, and however desirable the change it proposes may be, if rightly procured and applied, it is, as now proposed, pregnant with evil and disaster—as defeating the end sought, by enabling the opposition to disdain and disobey it, should they remain in the Church, or turn it upon us should they revolt—pointing to the violated constitution as a motive of sympathy and co-operation from all the intermediate strength of the Church, between the “border” and the North—pointing to it in all litigations for the local or general property of the Church, amidst the confusions that may follow its enactments.

My objections to this Report are two-fold—the obvious constitutional defect referred to, and the peril of a measure so extraordinary to the unity of the church, and by consequence, to the cause of the slave himself.

There are two classes of thinkers among us respecting the right to make new terms of membership. First those who contend that we can make no new general rules whatsoever, except by the process prescribed in the “restrictive rules”—the two-third majority here, the three-fourth majority in the annual Conferences. To these brethren, of course the document before us is inadmissible. It prescribes non-slaveholding as a condition of membership in the church. Now this must be a new rule, an old rule, or no rule.—There is no other possibility for it. It certainly belongs not to the last category of being no rule. It prohibits the admission of slaveholders in our church hereafter under given circumstances.

This is certainly a rule or condition of membership. Is it then an old or a new rule? Assuredly it is not an old one, for what then would be the use of re-enacting it by the chapter of this report. It results then that it must be a new one, and therefore inadmissible to all such as believe that we cannot adopt a new general rule but by the provision of the "restrictive rules."

The other class of thinkers are few among us, and certainly very recent. I know not that they have ever appeared except in connection with this controversy. They contend that the restriction on the change of the general rules, interferes not with the adoption of new rules, provided the latter be not incompatible with the old ones—that it interferes only with the change of the old ones—not with an addition to the series of the rules but with a change of individual rules.

The question then presents itself precisely here: Is this proposed rule incompatible with any existing one? I contend that it is, and my reply to the question will be equally applicable to the many brethren here, who consider the objectionable section of the report, as only an explanatory declaration of the old rule: they will please to observe this fact.

I. The existing general rule prohibits the acquisition of slave property by the slave traffic, that is the "Buying or Selling of men, women and children," &c. I use the word traffic not because it is the best, but because it is the most convenient. Now I affirm that this prohibition of the acquisition of slaves by purchase, implies, by the peculiar circumstances in which it was made, the right to hold them by inheritance. Here is a law affecting the great fact of Slavery—that fact is chiefly continued by inheritance—the traffic, enormous as it is, is but an incident of the system composed with the vast range of its transmission by inheritance. But with the latter are complicated the property, heirship, business, and domestic establishments of families. It could not therefore be treated as uncompromisingly as the traffic. The purchase of slaves is therefore prohibited, while the inheritance of them is left untouched. Slaveholding itself is therefore not prohibited—in other words, sad a fact as it may be to many of you, slaveholding itself is allowed by the general rules, the organic law of the church, and therefore the introduction of a new general rule, prohibiting it, is in contravention of the present general rule, and can be done only by the constitutional process provided in the restrictive rule.

I cannot see how this view of the existing law can be evaded. Take an illustration. Throughout the South of Europe, wine is habitually used by the common people; they drink neither tea nor coffee; wine is their drink at all their meals. Especially is this the case in the French provinces. Go into any of the French villages and you will find that every family provides its own wine, almost as habitually as it provides its bread. In these villages, there

are, nevertheless, drinking shops—groggeries, as we would call them, *cabarets*, they call them. They are not as degraded as our village taverns, but are, nevertheless, the centres of whatever hard drinking or bacchanalian vices may endanger the village morals.

To bring the subject more immediately home to us, suppose, now, that we sit here in the midst of one of these French communities, and we learn that a law has been made prohibiting “the buying or selling of wine with the intention of drinking it,” but without a word of reference to the universal and immemorial custom among the village families of providing wine within their own households—would any man have doubt of the application of the law?—Would he not see that the well known cabarets were alone aimed at? Could he suppose that the general and confirmed household custom was to be revolutionized by a law having no direct applicability to such a change, but having specific applicability to other and acknowledged evils? This domestic use of wine may, indeed, be attended with abuses—it is an evil of itself; the interference with the cabaret sales, may indirectly or in spirit, be a reflection on the use of the beverage any where but would any court of justice hold these wine-drinking households amenable to such a law?—Could it possibly be thus misconstrued by any thoughtful man?

But to come still more and irresistibly to the point, let me ask, if, fifty years after the enactment of such a law—fifty years, during which, the household use of wine had been entirely uninterrupted in the province; but during which the law had, in frequent instances, been applied to the cabaret abuses—if, I say, after such a period, a legal theorist should rise up, insisting that, as all wine-drinking is attended with evil, therefore the law was comprehensive of all wine-drinking, and that a new explanatory declaration should be made to that effect, overturning the whole old domestic usage—a usage which had long preceded the law, which was undisturbed by it, as its inception, and has never been disturbed by it for the subsequent half century—would not your legal theorist be pronounced demented? Would it not be the most charitable explanation of his extravagance to suppose that his temperance ultraism had confounded his wits?

And now, Sir, I submit, is not the analogy of the case precise?

Such, I insist, is the only legitimate construction of the literal expression of the rule. No other view is possible when you look it thus deliberately in the face. You may lament it—I lament it—we might have been saved infinite evil had the policy of the church been otherwise from the beginning; but such has it been, and the question is not now how to evade, but how to rectify it—whether by an infraction of your organic law, you shall provide a dead letter to be justly rejected and disdained by your opponents, should they continue with you, or to be fatally used against you, should they be driven from you, and thus in either case defeat your

own designs—pushing the slave farther and farther from your helping reach, or overthrowing the unity and strength of the church—and this for the sake of a measure which it is in your power fully to secure by the prescribed constitutional process.

II. I have said that the whole history of the church in relation to Slavery confirms this interpretation of the General Rule.

Let us now look more deliberately at its relation to that evil before, at the time of and ever since the introduction of this general rule.

Prior to the adoption of the Restrictive Rules—that is from 1784 to 1808—the General Conference had unrestricted power over the subject. Its enactments respecting it varied. It was intent upon doing something effective, but was confounded at every point by the embarrassments of the question. At the memorable “Christmas Conference,” (1784,) having yet unrestricted powers, it prohibited all slaveholding on the part of our members, but notwithstanding its plenary powers it announces this law with noticeable diffidence, being “deeply conscious,” it says, “of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established, excepting on the most pressing occasion.” Before this extreme measure it had only ventured to denounce Slavery, and to “pass its disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves and to advise their freedom.” This prohibitory law of the Christmas Conference was accompanied with numerous provisos, granting many delays and conveniences for emancipation, and subjecting the whole enactment to the supremacy of the varying laws of the different slaveholding States.

But now note one most important fact just here, namely, that under a distinct question appended to this law, the “*buying or selling*” of slaves—the very subject of the present General Rule—is treated also, and all the delays and indulgent conditions of the preceding law, are avoided: the “buyers” and the “sellers” are “immediately to be expelled unless they buy them on purpose to free them.” So reads this second law. Here then we see conclusively how “the fathers” discriminated the traffic—the “buying and selling”—from the holding of slaves, even while providing for the extirpation of both, and the former is distinguished by the very terms which are used in our present General Rule. Let this fact be carefully noticed, for it clinches our argument.

But this is not all. The agitation produced by this comprehensive action against not only slave “buying and selling,” but “slaveholding” itself, was so violent, that in a few months it was deemed necessary to suspend the law, and in 1785 the suspension was announced and a *Nota Bene* inserted, containing a mere general declaration against the evil. And now mark, sir, this conclusive fact, viz: that the very next year (1786,) after the long, detailed law against all slaveholding was repealed; the other law pas-

sed at the same time, against "buying and selling" slaves, is retained in the Discipline. The prohibition of simple slaveholding, with all its accommodating provisions, is abandoned, because of the disturbance it had produced by its bearing on families and their legalized property in slaves; but the absolute, unconditional, uncompromising law which accompanied it, and which was exclusively against "buying and selling" slaves, is retained. Why could this be kept and not the other? Because it evidently referred to the traffic—and the traffic, known and acknowledged every where, to be atrocious and infamous could be less hazardously condemned. And now I repeat, this retained part of the law is identical in sense, and almost so in words, with our existing General Rule, the rule which the advocates of the report before you contend, comprises "slaveholding" as well as slave "buying"—a construction utterly fallacious, but without which they would be compelled to abandon the chapter of their report as unconstitutional. The only essential difference is that it prohibits the giving away of slaves as well as the buying and selling of them—an important fact to be recalled directly.

But this is not all. This retained part of the old law was the only statute on the subject till the present general rule was inserted among our constitutional laws. Only three years elapsed before that change was made.

Here, then, we have four notable facts. First: The enactment of a law specifically against slaveholding, accompanied by a distinct law against slave "buying and selling." Second: The repeal of the first, owing to the hostility which was produced by its complication with recognized property and household establishment.—Third: The retention of the second, made possible, notwithstanding all this hostility, by the fact that it was addressed to an atrocious and ignominious incident of Slavery—the traffic. Fourth: The incorporation, a short time afterwards, of this retained prohibition, into the constitutional law of the Church, in language essentially identical in meaning and nearly so in words, with the exception of a phrase against the giving away of slaves, which is omitted. Now, confronting these historical facts of the case, can we longer doubt the sense of the general rule?

Every incident, every accident of its history, thus bears down irresistibly to my conclusion. Why even the omission of that phrase respecting the giving away of slaves? It had been retained while the ordinance remained only as a common statute, but now that this statute is to be equaled to the supreme importance of a constitutional law, it is omitted. Why? Evidently because slaveholding—the transmission of slaves in families—was not intended to be prohibited. The gift of slaves to children at marriage; the settlement of them by parents at death on other branches of the family, might seem to be embarrassed by the phrase.

Hence, in making the rule a constitutional law, it was more carefully guarded. And thus it stands to-day, with all these historical incidents and exponents about it, defining and defending invincibly its literal sense.

And still more than all this; for I have thus far only shown first, what was our action on Slavery prior to this general rule, and secondly, at its inception. What now does the subsequent course of the Church testify on the subject? It has been one unbroken demonstration of my interpretation of the law. Brethren who favor this Report, in order to introduce, without the constitutional process, a rule virtually against slaveholding itself, assert that the present general rule is such. But where is a single historical fact that supports them? When the rule was enacted, the church included slaveholders in all parts of its slave territory, but was it applied then to a single case?

A few years afterwards, Coke and Asbury wrote their notes on the Discipline; they commented on this very rule, but without a single intimation that it applied to anything else than the "buying and selling" of slaves, though Slavery was extensively extant in the Church.

The same year in which their notes appears, appears also in the Discipline a long chapter making various provisions for the trial of those who may "buy or sell" slaves, and certain guards against the promotion of slaveholders themselves to official posts of example, but without one prohibitory word against the domestic possession of slaves. More than this, that very chapter contains a paragraph making the slaveholder admissible to the Church, on condition that "the preacher shall have spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of Slavery," but without a word requiring emancipation.

In 1812, the General Conference being then under the restrictive rule, omitted all the chapter of ordinary statutes on Slavery, but retained the constitutional or general rule which it could not change, and referred the mode of its administration to the Annual Conferences; but the act by which it was thus referred, said not a word about slaveholding; it speaks of the "buying and selling" of slaves alone.

Laws have been repeatedly made keeping slaveholders from the official posts of the church, but never from private membership.

Thus, during sixty-seven years, the action of the Church has been continued on the subject, and has uniformly shown that non-slaveholding has not been a condition of membership, except for a few agitated months, before the adoption of the present general rule, and never once since its adoption. How can we evade the long unbroken demonstration of these facts?

III. And now, I ask, does not this literal and historical construction of the rule accord with the best principles of legal interpretation?

It is a familiar maxim of the Bar that the exceptions proves the law—*exceptio probat regem*. The practical or virtual law of the Church being the admission of slaveholders, the exceptions are the exclusion of the “buyers” and “sellers” of slaves, and the specification of these exceptions proves the virtual or practical law. “The force of the maxim,” says Whateley, “the force of the maxim (which is not properly confined to the case of an *exception*, strictly so called,) is this: ‘that the mention of any circumstance introduced into the statement of either a definition or of a precept, law, remark, &c., is to be presumed *necessary* to be inserted, so that the precept, &c. would not hold good if this precept were absent.’ In short, the word, “*only*,” or some such expression, is supposed to be understood. If, *e. g.*, it be laid down, that he who breaks into an *empty* house shall receive a certain punishment, it would be inferred that this punishment would not be incurred by breaking into an *occupied* house; if it were told us that some celestial phenomenon could not be seen by the naked eye, it might be inferred that it might be visible through a telescope,” &c. The existing general rule is a negative law—it prohibits slave buying and selling, thereby authorising or permitting slaveholding by inheritance. Negative laws often authorize infinitely more than they prohibit. A law prohibiting the circulation of paper money under \$5, prohibits only four denominations, but authorizes the circulation of any numbers beyond, even to millions. A law prohibiting the sale of ardent spirits in less quantities than a quart, authorizes the sale of a quart, a keg, a hogshead, or a thousand hogsheads. Turn to the chapter of your Discipline on Slavery, and you will find another example: *official* members are prohibited from holding slaves—a fact that certainly implies that unofficial members may hold them—and so abolitionists have always interpreted, and always complained of the law. Such is the true method, as I believe of interpreting our actual laws on slavery, and such the inevitable result of its interpretation. Metaphysics are seldom an aid to legal investigation; the enlightened judge on the bench will take one clear literal criticism, one illustrative historical fact, as more decisive than a thousand metaphysical subtleties. The whole literal showing of the law, and all the facts of our connection, as a church, with slavery, for nearly three quarters of a century, confront and confound any metaphysical construction of the present case, contrary to that which we have given.

The precepts of the general rules—of “doing no harm,” of “doing good,” &c.—have been assumed as authorizing a new law against slavery, without the process of restrictive rule; and examples have been quoted from our past legislation. One or two such examples have occurred, but our best judges of law would say, I think, that they were unconstitutionally obtained, however they may be, otherwise, compatible with the constitution. They

are unimportant, however, I think, in this controversy. If these vague precepts authorise any such liberties with our constitutional rights of membership, such liberties must certainly be limited to generally conceded points; especially must they not interfere with matters already in the law by direct specification or equally inevitable implication. But beside the general principle to "do no harm," or to "do good," &c., we have the specific rule on slavery, and this, as I have shown, has its clear, literal, and historical meaning. No general precept can interfere with this, for no general precept can contravene a specific law, given in the same code, or the same document.

The result is, that the existing general rule authorizes simple *slaveholding*. It does not discriminate the moral character of this slaveholding, though it does that of the traffic, the discrimination of the former is implied in the general moral significance of our organization, it is implied in our secondary laws on slavery, but it is not *specified* in the terms of the constitutional law. Let it come out then, sir—for the sake of frankness, for the sake of repentance, for the sake of amendment, let it be acknowledged that historically, constitutionally, administratively, we have been a *slaveholding*, though an *anti-slavery* Church. Not *pro-slavery*, mark, but *anti-slavery*, yet admitting slaveholders—not because slavery is right, not because the Church admits it to be right. On the contrary she declares it to be a great evil, yet has always held that she could not refuse a man admission into her communion simply on the ground that he was a slaveholder. We cannot deny it. You deplore it; every man here from the "border" deplores it, even though he may deem it a necessary fact. We deplore it but cannot deny it.

How shall we reform the stern and sad fact? That is the question, and should be the gist of all our present rambling debates.—How? Not by overriding the Constitution and all the unmistakable monuments of our history respecting it. Not by rending the Church by the provocations of an unauthorised, and therefore oppressive proceeding, Not by shaking down the walls of its strength that now bears up so many guns, pointed against the evil, merely because a single angle of those walls defends it. Such violent measures might call forth the shouts of the thoughtless multitudes, or gratify our personal anti-slavery zeal; but we are here not as a mob, nor as zealots, but as legislators. The highest religious responsibilities of this continent centre in this hall to-day. Methodism, though once severed and shivered by this terrible evil, stands yet forth in its organic unity, solidity, and mightiness throughout these middle and northern States. Shall the giant genius of discord, Sampson like, shake down its remaining pillars, and lay its remaining strength in the dust? Another division of the Church could not, we all know, be limited to the Border. It would strike its

desolating fractures, like the rending of an earthquake, through all our solid central strength, to the very North itself. Our denominational history would close, sir, with another such a disaster.—Fragments of the stately structure might remain, but fragments which would themselves only crumble more and more away. And shall we incur this peril at a day, in which, by social and political causes, as well as religious, every hour is enlarging our anti-slavery field and facilitating the speedy, if not peaceful conquest—the *self-conquest*, it may be, of the very region where this unguarded blow must strike most ruinously, and whence it must rebound most disastrously upon ourselves?

Two positions have I always maintained in my long editorial career, on this subject; the first, that our anti-slavery action must always bear with it the guarantee of the Constitution; secondly, that it should be so guarded as never to lose its most important fields, as I deem them—the fields of the Border Conferences, where, no man who knows anything about them, can doubt that its ultimate triumph is certain, though it be slow.

Both for the good of the slave and the good of the Church then, do I plead here for a modification of this Report. Let us have action on slavery, and let us have it as far forward as we can without breaking up the constitution and breaking down the church.—These are my only restrictions. I send forth this avowal to all my friends, to all my enemies, and will stand by it or fall by it. Any other course must be fatal to our own ends; why, then, should we insist upon it? Are we contending only for phrases? for speculative opinions? or for practical results? In any contingency whatever, this document must fail of practical advantage. If it fails here, it will fail because of the defect I have pointed out. If it fails not here, yet will it fail elsewhere, on the same account; it will be decried and cast away as a dead letter, because of its alleged unconstitutionality. In either case, therefore, it will fail, and fail too because brethren will persist in retaining a form of words which many conscientious men cannot admit. One only other result can follow; it may *not* fail in another respect; it may be the occasion of disunion, and in that case its disastrous liabilities would effect every litigation, every tide of local or general property, between the parties. Is, then, this the christian-like, statesman-like measure that the exigencies of this hour demand, at our hands? For the sake, then, of the slave, for the sake of the church, admit, dear brethren, this feeble plea of one to whom both are as dear as to any of you.

[When Dr. McClintock sat down, after reading Mr. Stevens' speech, the latter added some remarks.

Mr. Stevens said, with permission he would say a few words additional. The written speech contained all that was essential to the argument. He had aimed to do justice to the

subject, viewed in all its bearings and relations. The conclusions arrived at, were reached inevitably. And he could not, without conscious self degradation and life-long remorse, do otherwise than speak and vote adverse to the report of the majority on slavery.

He referred to the expression of St. Paul about speaking "as a fool in relation to personal affairs." Not foolishly, however, said Mr. S. They must pardon him, if, in a humble manner, he should venture to imitate the apostle's example.

He had been known and read of all men as an anti-slavery man. Nor would any one, who knew his history in New England, suspect his anti-slavery integrity. Others might, however. He therefore protested, in the most emphatic manner, that his present course had not been prompted by any unworthy or selfish motive. Not a word, not an unworthy motive had been whispered in his ear by one of the brethren from the border. "If any one knows, or thinks he knows to the contrary, let him rise now and here, and impeach me this hour." "My convictions on this subject, as expressed in that speech, are the honest conclusions of my own mind, reached after a careful and repeated examination of the facts." This Mr. S. affirmed in the most emphatic manner, and declaring his conscious integrity as a Methodist, as a christian minister, and as an anti-slavery man. On his knees, before God, he had made up his mind.

"There are," said he, "three great epochs in my life.— When I was converted in the Sabbath School; when in the dying chamber of the sainted Olin, I yielded up my heart entirely to God, and was wholly consecrated to his service; and here in this capital, at the seat of the General Conference, on my knees, in my chamber, where I reached the conclusion now announced to oppose the adoption of this majority report on slavery.

"And all this was done before any one had whispered to me a single flaw in that report. He examined it all alone. He saw the inconsistencies it contained. He clearly and fully appreciated the evil results to the church, from its adoption. And however much he might lose by the decision to oppose it, he saw that the church would gain by the defeat of that report. And he was willing to suffer for the church. While thus pondering the matter in his heart, "I felt," said he,

"that I grew great, humbly and powerfully great, in my purpose and position."

"The antagonism that he now saw would exist between himself and his former intimate associates, and numerous friends in the General Conference, who had hitherto stood by him had satisfied him that he should not command their sympathies as heretofore, nor their suffrage. And he had written home to his family that he should "return to them stripped of office and of authority," because of the principles and positions he now advocates.

"He had spoken with Br. Wise, the editor of *Zion's Herald*, and received his assurance that no one should in those columns be allowed to impeach his integrity, or brand him as a traitor. He claimed to be honest, though he differed from his brethren. And he had proved it by taking a position which must sacrifice his prospect of advancement. But with him the interest of the church was paramount—and he was nothing.

Mr. Stevens then appealed to his New England brethren. "I am one of you," said he. "My heart ever looks homeward to your free hills where liberty triumphs. You have fought with me side by side against the pro-slavery men of the North. And until you adopted the extravagant constructions now embodied in your report, you deemed me a trustworthy abolitionist. Will you, in your new-born zeal, thrust from you one who has been identified with you for fifteen or sixteen years—one who was the triumphant leader of your anti-slavery forces in the old and earlier strife?"

Mr. S. closed by affirming his confidence in the principles of expediency as substantially true and important. And this case he deemed a fitting one for their lawful application.]

Mr. Crary said:

MR. PRESIDENT: I am solemnly impressed with the sublimity of this contest, and the importance of the subject now before us. I humbly desire to express my own convictions upon this momentous issue, and I can but be thankful that I have triumphantly obtained the floor, after a struggle of nearly a month. I am not indifferent to the urgent demands for action that comes up from every quarter, but it were better to look at the subject calmly, prayerfully, and with faith in the God of progress, than to do anything rashly. By patient investigation and comparison of systems, we may find, at last, the truth, and keep it. I regret to hear, occasionally, inuen-

does on this floor against the young men who have the honor to be members of this body.

It is true, that considerations of mere reverence for the past would not deter me from voting for changes manifestly just and proper ; but I repel the insinuation of disloyalty to Methodism.—The young men who are here are the sons of Methodists, and of Methodist preachers. They had mothers—if born in the west—heroic in their devotion to Methodism—mothers who, not unfrequently, walked four or five miles to class meeting, or circuit preaching. Often, too, were these mothers obliged to take to meeting the faithful and well trained dogs of the household to guard them through the forest from prowling wolves. Are these young men disloyal who studied Methodism in the nursery, and learned the cherished names of pioneer preachers as household words ! No, we will yield to none in firm devotion to the doctrines and principles of the church.

We listen attentively to the sage advice of the Episcopal Board, we hear with gratitude the teachings of the past ; and as our reverend friend, the present occupant of the chair, instructed on last Sabbath, we bore to the lessons of history, but while we do so, we will dare to appeal to them. For my own part, Mr. President, I must to-day, speak in favor of a change of Discipline of our church on the subject of Slavery. I am convinced that some change ought to be made, for the following reasons :

I. Because the regulations of the Discipline do not come up to the standard of public opinion in the church since her organization.

The opinion of the framers of the Discipline on the subject of slavery were here in advance of the laws they enacted. The law of the church ought to express her opinions on great moral questions.

Look back at the history of the church, and search through the minutes and debates of the General Conferences, and you must feel that while the church abhorred slavery as a system, she hesitated to prohibit slaveholding. There was, at the same time, a great and progressive movement in favor of the temperance cause. The legislation of the church had been similarly careful and hesitating on the great evils—intemperance and slavery. James Axley, of precious memory, a hero in the temperance cause, made a motion in the General Conference of 1840 to forbid ministers from engaging in the liquor traffic, but the motion was lost. It was renewed at the next General Conference—a motion was made to amend by including the membership, but the amendment was laid on the table, and the resolution to prohibit preachers from engaging in the liquor traffic passed by a small majority.

The slavery question had like fluctuations. Our fathers spoke boldly and fought bravely, but they did not go to the length of entire prohibition. Public opinion in the church has been moulded by our standard writings, the preaching of our brave old men, and

the instinctive abhorrence to oppression in the American mind.—The church, in the coils of this monster, has struggled nobly, but like the old Trojan priest, in the folds of the sea-serpent, she has seemed to struggle in vain. It were better to embody in the statute the living condemnation of the church against this crying evil.—Being fully impressed with the wrongs of slavery, and knowing well the meaning of the words they employed, our fathers drafted the general-rule. Does that prohibit slaveholding? Does it embody our sentiments?

2. We argue in favor of a change of the Discipline, because we do not believe that the law of the Church prohibits slaveholding, or extirpates slavery. Why did not our fathers put in the plain, simple word, "holding," if they intended to make a prohibitory law? To find out the meaning of a statute, we are to go to the words and interpret them literally. If there should be ambiguity, we must try to ascertain the intention of the law makers. Look at the words of the general rule—the *buying* and *selling* of human beings is clearly forbidden; but is the *holding*? By a violent inference, we may reach that deduction; but does the fact appear plainly in the letter of the law? We will suppose that Dr. Hodgson, for instance, is a slaveholder, and this may not be an improbable supposition; he is indicted under this law. You are the Judge, sir; this Conference is the Jury. If I were his advocate, I should demur to the indictment, and I apprehend that no intelligent Court would fail to sustain the demurer, on the ground that the crime with which the defendant would stand charged is not forbidden in the statute.

We cannot believe that slaveholding is specifically forbidden in the general rule. The concurrent history of the times, through which the legislation of the church fluctuated until the present law was enacted, proves that the general rule is not a prohibition of slaveholding. With great regret do I come to this conclusion, but there is no way to avoid it. In Bang's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, vol. 1, page 216, you will find the strongest anti-slavery law enacted in the whole history of the church, and yet this is accompanied by provisions which plainly show that it was not intended to be prohibitory in its character. It was suspended in six months, and on the end of the suspending clause is tacked this strong anti-slavery sentiment as a *Nota Bene*: "We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery, and shall not cease to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means."

It is obvious from the subsequent history of the question, as it was agitated from time to time, that the enactments of the General Conference never approached prohibition. Already numerous quotations from the writers of pioneers of Methodism, and the minutes of the different General Conferences, have been put in record, to show that slaveholding was tolerated in the church. While I do

not believe nor contend that our Discipline is decidedly pro-slavery. I am confident that it never was sufficiently anti-slavery enough to express the sentiments of the Church generally. The statute enacted under the general rule, and contained in the chapter on slavery, does not prohibit slaveholding. It is probable that those who made this law thought that it rose to the maximum of prohibition found in the general rule, and yet it must be regarded by every candid man as a mere license man. It is true it commences boldly, nobly, and asks the stirring question, "What shall be done for the *extirpation* of the evil of slavery?" Extirpation from *ex* and *stirps*, means *from the roots*—taking out by the roots. There is no strange term in our language, and yet this earnest and solemn question is followed by the softest possible laws, provisos, and exceptions, which can only cut off the topmost branches of this tree we were determined to uproot. The law never reached the roots; they are green and vigorous, and have entwined themselves around the very heart of the church. We might construct a statute of similar import on the subject of polygamy.

It is not my intention to reproach the fathers by contrasting this law on slavery with a like statute on polygamy, but with the utmost regard for them, and the sole intention of showing how much we need a change in this law, I will write it thus—Of Polygamy.

QUESTION—What shall be done for the extirpation of the great evil of polygamy?

ANSWER 1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of polygamy; therefore no man having two or more wives shall be eligible to any official station in our church hereafter, where the laws of the State in which he lives will admit of divorce, and permit the divorced wife to enjoy good society. Is that prohibitory?

Ans. 2. When any traveling preacher becomes the husband of more than one wife, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal divorcement of all of his wives but one, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives.

Is adequate punishment meted to the offender here? Does that law prohibit?

Ans. 3. All our preachers shall prudently enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their wives to observe all the duties of the conjugal relation according to the word of God; and husbands must treat their wives with equal kindness, permitting them to enjoy equal authority in the family, &c.

Is this a prohibitory or a license law? It is a regulating law, a law which does not attempt to strike the monster, but simply coaxes, and lulls him.

We can come to no other conclusion than the sad one that our Disciplinary laws were never intended to prohibit mere slavehold-

ing. It can and does exist under these *extirpating* provisions.—The roots grew and flourished amid the wandering members of the church—its branches, dark and deadly, overshadowed the ministry, and at last its bitter fruits were gladly caught and held by episcopal bands, and that venerable and honorable Board was vilely contaminated by the unhallowed contact. The church was startled. A moral revolution was the result; convulsion followed convulsion on the border; desolation and grief went in their train. We leave the sickening details. We remember the opinions advanced by the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South at the first General Conference after the division. They said, and truly said, we presume, that those laws on slavery were a dead letter. They had not kept them, they did not intend to do so. Their course was such as to justify the remark of our venerable friend, Dr. Elliot, who said, "The M. E. Church South is built on the grace of slavery, the M. E. Church on the grace God." The M. E. Church South grew up under this peculiarly extirpating regime. They are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and with all their faults we love them still, our training made them.

3. We conclude that under the circumstances by which we were surrounded down to 1844, our rules did not do much toward the destruction of slavery. Private members, leaders, stewards, exhorters, preachers, traveling preachers, presiding elders, and bishops, become slaveholders under this process. Is it not time to change? We can afford to be moderate and liberal on this subject, for our circumstances have greatly changed. Now the law is something; it keeps slaveholders out of office in the church. In the heat of the contest of 1844, I was intensely interested in the actors—Old Baltimore was to me a cherished name. I read the history of that desolating controversy, and was charmed with the eloquence and power which Baltimore wielded against the onsets of her foes. What a scene of moral grandeur was that! when Baltimore stood bravely up with the Free State Conferences against the fearful tide of pro-slavery propagandism.

Slaveholders will not seek to enter on our folds. In Maryland and parts of Virginia, occasionally, a slaveholder may knock at our doors, but will they do so in Missouri, Arkansas and Kentucky. Our work is chiefly among the poor in the slave States, who are not involved in the the system. We have no hope of succeeding among the slaveholders. They naturally affiliate with the Church South. Let it be known and remembered that on this floor are two hundred and

twenty-three members of the General Conference from all parts of the land, and yet not one man is in favor of American slavery. Let it be proclaimed that this entire body is opposed to this vile abomination. Let slaveholders know that on this floor there is no apologist for slavery. Let every syllable on that record strike at that crime. And will slaveholders court admission to our Church. I apprehend no such danger.

4. I have been brought to favor a change in our discipline by the cogent reasoning of Drs. Elliott and Durbin, for I have all along understood them as advocating the sentiments. I could not well resist pleadings correspondent to my own moral convictions. Whether these learned and respected brethren came to my conclusions, I cannot say. I yield to their instructions and draw my own inferences.

5. A change, it seems to me, is demanded on account of the views which we all entertain of the system of slavery.—That our practice in reference to it has risen above law I have no doubt. This is a little strange. It is not often the case that in words we excel the law, yet we must believe the collated testimony of the majority of the Committee on Slavery. We do believe the statement of brethren on this floor. The administration excels the laws. Thank God for that? Is it generous to take advantage of the admissions of the anti-slavery majority, and jeer at them for their hearty acknowledgment of the well-doing of our border brethren.

I have no disposition to analyse the different kinds of slavery. Whether it be canonical or uncanonical—apostolic, post-apostolic or Pauline—I would consign it to utter reprobation. With the Bible in our hands we look at it. With the Spirit of God in our hearts we judge it.

We stand here as American citizens, free and enlightened. We answer for our responsibilities, and decide on our slavery. We are sovereigns—the law is our will—we cannot, will not justify slavery. We are not the subjects of Cæsar, but the masters of our thoughts, and the judges of our Slavery.—The system is better understood than in ancient times, and our relations to it are vastly diverse.

This system chattelizes hands, eyes, ears, hearts, soul body and the moral character; not only so, but it puts up in the shambles the witnessing Spirit of the living God, that bears

witness in the poor slave's soul, and his religion increases his par value.

Does our law come up to the sentiment of the enlightened men of this age?

It is a cruel power that crushes out humanity—an omnipresent curse. It reaches out its skeleton and bloody hand to rob and slay, all over this land of ours. I do not wonder at the feeling denominated fanatical, that arises in the hearts of freemen when they look at this giant evil. I do not wonder that freemen seek political relations, where they may more effectually stay this rolling death-tide.

In conclusion, then, I am irresistably driven to the determination to go for a reasonable change, an effectual alteration that will sweep away all of the reproach which may be heaped upon us now. It is with sincere and painful regret that I am obliged to differ with my respected friends who drew up the Majority Report on this subject. I admire that report for its bold, manly, logical, and truthful sentiments, but my investigations on this subject have driven me to say that our General Rule does not prohibit slaveholding, and this report conflicts with that rule. The law and its history proves that it tolerates slaveholding. The sentiments of the report challenge my respect.

It is objected to it that it presumes a man to be guilty of slaveholding before it is proven that the possession of a slave is *prima facie* evidence of guilt.

The objection is groundless. If a man be charged with counterfeiting, and apparatus for the business be found in his possession, the State relies on this fact, and finds him guilty, unless he establishes his innocence by testimony which will show that he is ignorant of the means by which the articles in his possession came there, or that they were there innocently. Stealing may be proved by the dumb witnesses unlawfully removed from their owner's possession. The man who has stolen goods must prove that he came by them lawfully, or the courts of the land will administer merited punishment. So when a man is charged with being a slaveholder, the fact is all the Church can or ought to prove. If there be mitigating circumstances, if the slave is old and helpless, or young and tender, or if he is to be free, the slaveholder can certainly show the facts. Possession of this miscalled property is evidence of deep and terrible guilt, unless inno-

gency is enstamped on the surface of surrounding facts.—Some of my brethren have considered the subject physiologically, and seem to be familiar with the process of slave increase by natural means. It is asked, Shall a man be tried because a slave mother produces before her master a newborn slave to be baptised in the woes of slavery. A newborn slave ! It is a misnomer. Every child is born free.—Dr. Elliott, in his excellent work on slavery, shows conclusively that the taking of a child from its mother's arms, and reducing it to slavery, is a crime equal at least to stealing a man from the coast of Africa.

We deny that God ever sent a human being into the world a slave, and the reduction of the infant to a condition of hopeless bondage, and unrequited toil, is an overtopping crime, challenging Heaven's vengeance. If such a child be found in a man's hands, who has reduced it to a state of Slavery, let him be tried, and if found guilty, expelled. The Church is only bound to prove the finding of the child, in this condition, in his man's hands.

A friend of mine bought a slave a year or two ago and set her free. He committed no offence. Another one told me he owned slaves in Georgia, but they worked for themselves, and he only held them to protect them. We have been edified with excessive funny comments on the idea of good and bad slaveholders—good and bad sinners, &c.

The distinction between the two classes is clear, logical, and ought to be made. With all my admiration of the report and its stinging sentiments, I am obliged to vote against it, or some parts of it, on constitutional grounds alone.—Would to God that we could all go together against this evil. God knows that the echo of the clanking chains on our southern brethren effects my heart deeply. What shall we do ? Shall we rush on to the destruction of this fair fabric we call our heritage ? Shall we yield up our rights in the Book Concern, and consign it to a half pro-slavery Church ? For if broken to pieces, we must diverge widely from each other in sentiment. We, my brethren of the North, can afford to be liberal ; we can afford to wait satisfied with a slight advance. Without speaking these sentiments, I could not consent to vote ; I do not, will not, desert the standard under which I have been glad to fight. It shall be my joy to work for the good time coming. Change

we must have, but let us be taught of the Lord, who in nature produces changes which are magnificent in the end.—Look at the fragile twig that peers from the warm earth. Ages to come it shall be the pride of the forest—the noble giant whose head shall lift itself amongst the clouds, and its topmost branches kiss the skies. It grew slowly, surely, silently. Nature's God teaches sublime lessons of wisdom. We will hearken to her voice. A brother grasped me by the hand a day or two since, and said, hold on four years longer and I will go with you. Let us march on, but be cautious whither. If we cannot change the constitution in four years, we can wait ten or twenty years. If in life's latest hour, I beheld Methodism free, vigorous, progressive, unstained by slavery, unaffected by strife, I shall die happy. Young as I am, compared with those venerable forms around me, I have experienced enough to shun an abyss so awful—bottomless and ruinous as that near which our brethren stood in 1844.—If my doubts can be removed, I shall go for the report, if not, I shall look to a change of the constitution as an ultimatum, and shall hope and pray that peace may dwell in all our borders forever. A modification of the chapter on slavery, which would make it equal to the general rule, would meet my cordial approbation. If this cannot be effected we must wait for light.

With sorrow and regret, I must acknowledge that our discipline is liable to the charge of being pro-slavery, and I call upon the toiling anti-slavery men of the Church to change it, so that it may conform to the teachings of the Holy Bible. I would not, as suggested by another, vindicate the character of our Heavenly Father against the base charge of sanctioning American slavery. Let us endeavor to reach the goal if we have to change the constitution and the law.

Mr. C. Blakeslee said :

Mr. President : I go for the Majority Report of the Committee on Slavery. I am in favor of it because it proposes to place the M. E. Church on a higher and better Anti-Slavery ground. It proposes to narrow and guard the door of the admission to slaveholders and slaveholding into the Church. But we are told this is unconstitutional—that we have no constitutional authority whatever to make slaveholding a test of membership in the church. Now, Sir, I do not

believe that Slavery has a constitutional existence and right in the church. In opposition to this notion, I believe and maintain that it is in the church, not by constitutional authority and power, but merely from the force of necessitating circumstances : that it is in the church by toleration and sufferance, as an evil, condemned and doomed to extirpation. Slavery has no place in our constitution ; it is an incidental evil—an excrescence that may be cast off at any time by General Conference enactment without touching our constitution. In support of this position I beg leave, Sir, to adduce a few considerations :

1. The constitution of the M. E. Church, i. e., the “ Six Restrictive Rules and the General Rules ” do not deny the General Conference the power to determine whether “ slaveholders shall be eligible to membership in the church ; hence, as it originally had that power, and actually exercised it at the time of organizing the church in 1784, it must still have that right. Brethren of the other side will not deny that the General Conference had the power to make Slavery a test of membership prior to the adoption of the constitution in 1808. Then, as there is not a sentence or word in her constitution taking from the General Conference this power, it now has it in all its original fullness and strength.

2. The constitution no where says members ought to hold slaves or that they may hold slaves, or that we are under any obligation whatever to hold slaves ; hence as to positive requisition, the constitution does not bind us, as a church, to Slavery and to slaveholding.

3. The constitution does not say slaveholders, as such, shall have a right in church : hence, if they are in the church at all, it is, and must be, by mere tolerance.

4. The constitution does not forbid the exclusion of slaveholders from the church by the enactments of General Conference ; hence, this body may pass a rule making them ineligible to membership without violating the constitution.

5. It cannot be put into the constitution of the church by construction. A constitution, like a deed or charter, is virtually a sealed instrument, and according to the fixed principles of judicial and legal equity and usage, its powers, limitations, and requisitions cannot be essentially altered or increased by implication. If I purchase one hundred acres of land, I cannot by construction, inference, or implication, make

it cover one rod or foot more than the 100 acres. If I buy a farm, and it has no connection with a public road, I cannot by implication, take one foot of my neighbors land to be used for my road-way ; but I must buy it with my money, or it must be secured to me at the public expense, and according to law. Now, Sir, how can our constitution, which, in its terms, merely secure to me my rights, be made by construction or inference to authorize or preserve in the church the practice of robbing other men of all their rights ? 2d. The design of the constitution is at war with all giving the authority of the constitution to slaveholding by construction. The constitution was not made for any such purpose. It was made to protect the rights of ministers and members ; it was made for the order, efficiency and purity of the church : it was made to save men, and bind them together in a holy, equal, and blessed brotherhood. 3d. Because slaveholding is wrong—a great and acknowledged wrong—it cannot by construction or influence be made constitutional. If the limitation of the exercise of a right—a natural right—do recognize the existence of such right, it is because it is a right—a national right, lying back of the constitution. Now, is slaveholding such a right ? No, Sir ! It has no right any where. It has no right in the church or out of it—it has no existence in right at all. It can exist only by express enactment of law : hence, it cannot, like a natural right, by any course of inference or construction, be brought into a church constitution. And when a right is said to be constitutional by implication, it is simply asserted that we had the right, as a natural one, and that the constitution indirectly recognizes it. Can a wrong like Slavery be put into a holy church constitution by inference ? No, Sir ! Any such interpretation or construing of a church constitution is subversive of all right, of all order, and of all purity. It is our duty, from this high place of Methodist law and power, to hurl an avalanche of disapproval upon it, and sweep it from the church. In view of this, we come clearly and irresistibly to the conclusion that, forbidding “the buying and selling of men, women and children” in our General Rules, cannot bring slaveholding under the constitution in any such sense as to make it unconstitutional to forbid it in the church.

6. The history of Slavery in the Church abounds with indubitable proofs of our position. Our Church has always

declared Slavery to be a great evil—a great, social, political and moral evil, that ought to be extirpated. Our fathers, at the organization of the Church, in 1784, projected a scheme for the removal of slaveholding from her bosom, but great difficulties in the way of carrying out this scheme constrained them to barely permit Slavery to remain, in a mitigated and mild form, amongst us. They most certainly did not give a constitutional canonization in our Church. From that time until now, its character and relation to the Church, has been in all essential particulars the same. In 1808, when our Constitution was adopted it was actually labelled in our book of Discipline, a “great evil,” doomed to be extirpated. So it stands in our Discipline to-day. It is not sanctified and established by our organic law, but it is condemned, labeled, and doomed to extirpation by the authoritative enactments and declarations of our highest legislative body, and judicial tribunal. It is said it has always been in the Church, therefore it is there by the power of the constitution. This proves too much. If all that is in the Church is there in such a sense that its removal by General Conference action is unconstitutional, then our laws, and all parts of our economy are fixed, so that any change implies and requires a change of our constitution. This is evidently absurd. There are many things in the Church that may be disposed of by the will of the General Conference, and slaveholding is one of these things. Yes, sir, it is in the book of our Discipline, placed, definitely placed, beyond the investing and preserving power of the Constitution, and explicitly condemned and doomed to extirpation. Thus doomed and devoid of constitutional protection it comes into our hands. We have full and constitutional power over it. But, sir, this majority report does not propose an ex post fact law. It will not, on the day it goes into operation, affect the membership of any person in our Church ; it will not condemn any one for anything done in past time ; it will leave all our members in the Church in good standing, just as they were before it became a law. It merely guards the Church against the admission of any more selfish, wicked slaveholding. If a member come into possession of a slave, or if a person desire to become a member of our Church who own slaves he must free such persons, if it can be done “without injury to the slave.” This is deemed unconstitutional. The report does not condemn

members who hold slaves for merciful purposes, nor does it forbid buying or selling slaves to make them free. It prohibits only an increase in the Church from without of what everybody in our Church acknowledges to be mercenary and wicked slavery ; and yet the plea of unconstitutionality is mightily urged against it. Against this plea I further urge three objections :

1. It is an undeniable fact, that Slavery is condemned by the great principles of civil law—of the common law of nations ; and yet this plea assumes that it is established, maintained, and defended by the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is an outlaw among the nations, but a legitimate child of our holy Church constitution. No, sir ! It can not be !

2. Then, if this plea be valid, wicked slaveholding in the Methodist Episcopal Church towers above the General Conference.

3. Then, if this plea be true and worthy, the whole, dark, wicked system of Slavery outside the Church has a broad, open, unobstructed highway into our Church. From the bottom of my heart I believe we have power to do all this Majority Report proposes—I believe we have full authority and power over Slavery in the Church.

I will now notice some remarks and positions of brethren of the other side of this question.

1. "It would be wrong to do indirectly what we could not do directly." True, but if Slavery be not established in the Church by constitutional authority, then we have a right to take a direct course of extirpation, or to reach it in an indirect manner by the provisions of the majority report.

2. "This plan would not extirpate Slavery." Doubtless it would lessen Slavery in the Church, wield her moral power against it, and this would do much toward extirpating it.

3. "Slaveholding is a term of membership unknown to the whole Christian world." This is a mistake, sir. Can a man hold slaves now in the Wesleyan Methodist Church in England ? Can our members hold slaves in the free States of this Union ? No, sir, they would be expelled in the North, East, and West, for holding slaves. It would be done under the authority of our general rule forbidding evil ; and on an appeal to this body, on points of law involved in such

a case, the administration of the preacher would be sanctioned by this body.

4. It is said we have but one "Lord and law-giver." True; but we make rules to carry out Christ's laws, and he says he came to preach deliverance to the captives, and would not suitable General Conference action greatly help in this matter?

5. It is urged, "this body, the General Conference, by its action in regulating Slavery, has sanctioned its existence in the church." Slavery is in the church, and has been all along, but it is in the church as a permitted evil. The General Conference has never thrown around it the conservative and defending power of the constitution.

6. "The Wisconsin resolution to change the general rule so to forbid holding a slave, and the resolutions of other conferences of nearly the same purport, did not receive the sanction of three-fourths of all the Annual Conferences; hence this body has no constitutional authority to pass a law like the Wisconsin resolution, or that will make slaveholding a test of admission, into the church; or of retaining membership in the church." Now, sir, if this body had a right, a constitutional right, to pass this majority report before the Wisconsin rule was lost, on its way around the circuit of the conferences, it has that right still. Some of the conferences did not deem it necessary to pass the Wisconsin resolution, but judged the General Conference competent to act against Slavery. It may have failed on this account.

This General Conference is the proper tribunal to settle great questions of law. It is in our hands. I believe we ought to declare that right by passing this majority report. If the action of brethren, and of inferior tribunals, can rob this body of its legitimate rights, it may ere long be strongly shorn of its power.

I will now turn my attention more particularly to the chapter of the report under consideration. It says, "we declare we are as much as ever convinced of the evil of Slavery." We trust there will never be any less conviction on that subject than there is now. Again, we "believe that all men, by nature, have an equal right to freedom, and that no man has a moral right to hold a human being as property." That is an explicit and noble utterance of the great truth that man is man. It cuts up the chattel principle by the

roots. It is worthy this body. I should like, by the passage of this report to put a trumpet to the anointed lips of this General Conference, and by a concentration of the vast moral power of our 799,000 church members, and 12,000 gospel ministers, utter the sublime truth in the ears of this whole nation, and of the world. [Here Mr. Blakeslee's time expired.]

*Afternoon Session.*—Conference met at 2 o'clock. Bishop Baker in the Chair. The religious exercises were conducted by Mr. Bennet. The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Griffith moved to suspend the order of the day.—Carried.

Mr. Bangs offered the following :

The Committee of Temporal Economy beg leave to report, in part, the following resolution on the paying of the widows, and orphans of deceased Bishops, viz :

*Resolved*, That answer 3d, section 1st, chapter 3d, part 3d, of the Discipline be stricken out, and the following inserted : The widows and orphans of deceased Bishops shall be allowed to draw on the funds of the Book Concern annually, for the amount of their disciplinary allowance.

H. BANGS, *Chairman*.

*Indinnapolis*, May 28th, 1856.

Laid on the table.

Mr. Porter of New England offered the following :

*Resolved*, That the voting by yeas and nays on the first resolution of the Majority Report on Slavery be the special order of the day, at three and a half o'clock this afternoon.

Dr. Durbin earnestly objected to that motion. That is not, said he, the question under discussion, but one that has not been discussed. He was taken by surprise, and supposed all were. When the second resolution was presented, he was surprised. He understood that their object in bringing up the question on the second resolution was to try the strength of the real case. Now we are asked to try our strength on the first resolution. This is not proper nor parliamentary. They were now ready to decide the question debate. He said they were ready to take the vote on the second resolution, and if we loose that, it can then be seen what is to be done. He wanted an open, clear, well understood course.

Mr. Porter knew nothing of the reasons for introducing

the second resolution before the first. All the speeches had gone to this effect. He could now vote on the first resolution. Supposed all were ready. He was also ready to vote on the second.

Dr. Durbin replied that on the 2d he was ready to vote.

Dr. Raymond said, with reference to bringing the 2d first, all he had to say was that they had received from 29 or more Conferences, memorials on Slavery both to change the chapter on Slavery and the general rule. The Committee spent all its time on the chapter—no time was spent on the general rule. They had no discussion—we want none here. With him it was a mere matter of taste. He thought it more important. Some brother said, it is best to move the adoption of the second resolution first, because it will be said, that if the first is taken it would look like taking an advantage. He would like to come to voting.

Dr. Durbin liked to have the ship well trimmed. He was objecting because it was said, let us have the 2nd resolution, and then if that fail, we can fall back on the other. Let us take them in the order, and I am ready.

Dr. Kenneday moved that the resolution be amended by striking out the 1st and inserting the 2nd. This was withdrawn, as Mr. Porter said he was not ready.

Mr. Reddy moved to take up the order of the day.—Carried.

Mr. Blakeslee continued his speech, (which we have concluded in the morning report to keep the whole together.

Mr. Munroe, of New Jersey, addressed the Conference. He said if the Conference was now ready to come to a vote on the subject before it, he should not tenaciously insist upon his right to be heard ; but as they have declared by their action that they are not willing to close the debate even with the session of to-day, and as none of the New Jersey delegation have yet spoken, he must beg the indulgence of the brethren while he made some remarks. If, said he, there be a delegation on this floor entirely untrammelled and unembarrassed on this subject, it is ours. Our Conference has not a foot of slave territory within its borders, and in all our membership, we have not a single slaveholder ; no action, therefore, of this body will directly affect any one of them. Farther, the brethren in the Conference who have sent us here, have exacted from us no pledges, and they have

given us no instructions. With the knowledge which they believed us to possess, they have sent us h'ere to obtain all the light we could gain from the deliberations of this body, and then to vote as light and truth might dictate.

In the remarks I shall make, I shall not feel called upon to disturb the repose of "the fathers." They "having served their generation, by the will of God, have fallen asleep, and "after," to them, not "life's fitful fever," but life's earnest, loving labor, they "sleep well." He who attempts to cast a shadow on their good name, may indeed succeed in bringing a blot upon his own reputation, but they are too high up to be affected by it. They need not our defense—we cannot exalt them by any eulogium—they are enshrined in that brightness which enshrines those who having been wise, do shine as the firmament, and having turned many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Neither, Mr. President, shall I feel called upon to enter upon the abstract question of Slavery. I know it is comparatively easy to speak of Slavery in its malignant form. To portray its horror—to tell of its oppression—of its fostering the grosser passions—of its affording the opportunity of their indulgence upon the helpless victims in their hands, easy to collect its horrors, and when you have made the mass big and black to hurl it at the head of those who may be innocently connected with the system, and doing all that in them lies to mitigate and remove those horrors; but this, Mr. President, I submit, is not the subject before us now—we are considering what seems to me simply a question of power and a question of propriety. Can we pass the report of the majority of the committee on Slavery, and if we can, ought we to do it?

[Before proceeding to examine the question immediately under consideration, Mr. Munroe alluded to the fact that if the report was adopted, the test established would be different from that of every other church he knew of. He would however except "The Associate Reformed," and "The Wesleyan Churches." Observing an enquiring look from one of the Bishops, Mr. M. added in parenthesis "Our Wesleyan brethren of America I mean."]

On the question of our constitutional power to enact this legislation, I shall say comparatively little, as much that I designed to say has been anticipated in the very convincing argument against it by Brother Stevens this morning. I

may remark, however, that in support of the assumption that we have the power, there are plead two things—a principal and precedents. It is said that our church is fundamentally an anti-Slavery church. True, but as the term anti-Slavery is used with a variety of significations, this proves nothing until you have settled the sense in which it is applicable to us. One set of men claim to be anti-Slavery, and they say that with them this is a principle which impels them to labor to destroy the union of these states, because they regard the union as the great prop of Slavery. Another set allege that with them it is a principle which requires them to denounce the constitution of the country ; as, for example, Mr. Beecher did in his famous speech in the North Church, in New-Haven ; saying that the constitution was the foundation of all our troubles on the subject. The true question for us here is this, is the M. E. Church so anti-slavery as to make slave-holding simply a test of membership ? That this is not her principle is evident, as was shown unanswerably by Bro. Stevens, both from the universal practice of the church, and from the legislation previous to and connected with the adoption of our general rules.

But it is plead that there are precedents which support the assumption that we possess the power claimed. In answer to this, I remark that precedents drawn from the legislation of the church must be of one or two descriptions—either such as are drawn from the action of the original body which created this delegated General Conference in 1808, or from the action of the General Conference since that time. Those which are of the first description, it is plain, are not strictly precedents for us at all, for the original body was possessed of supreme, whereas we have only restricted, powers. Concerning precedents of the second class, this fact is to be borne in mind that the original body which created the delegated General Conference handed down to the new organization two descriptions of law, one which was protected and guarded by restrictions which can not be altered except by a specified process in the Annual and General Conferences, and the other not possessed of this sacred character, but mere statutes which we can change and annihilate at our pleasure. Such for example as the section on dress, the section on class-meetings, and the seventh chapter on slavery as it stood at that time. Now the

question of membership as affected by slaveholding does not belong to this second and subordinate class, but is included in the first, so that mere legislation on the subject is no precedent showing that we have a right to exclude for simple slaveholding. The action must touch that very point before it can be of any value as argument. If Bro. Mattison had given us a case of this description among the instances he adduced the other day, it would have been to the point, but failing in this vital particular, they amount to nothing. This fact, too, that the original body have handed down to us two descriptions of law, with the other remarks I have made, meets the instances adduced yesterday by Bro. Clark. His precedents are all, either of legislation where the whole matter was regulated by a simple statute, which we have the right to alter, or they are taken from the action of the original body itself, or they are mere verbal alterations making no real change. Neither principle nor precedent then will justify assuming that we have the constitutional power to enact the legislation proposed.

The matter may be considered in the light of propriety. If we had the power, ought we to adopt the report before us? If we look at the whole case fairly and candidly, I am persuaded that we shall see we ought not. In the first place, the legislation it proposes has not the positive merit of being called for to remedy any existing wrong in our Church. Is it needed because the Church has so cherished the sin of slavery that God has withdrawn from her the light of his approving countenance? Let us look at your quadrennial address, Mr. President, and we see that in all the elements of a solid, healthy, valuable progress, our Church never stood higher than it does at present.

Is it needed in order that the Church may, by legal enactment, condemn the principle of property in man? I maintain that he has already been done by the General Rule, which prohibits the buying and selling of slaves. What is the first idea of property? Why that of something of which, if it possesses any pecuniary value, we have a right to dispose, and when the law says "you shall not buy or sell," it strikes a blow at the very root of the question of property. Suppose that the Legislatures of Virginia and Kentucky were to pass laws prohibiting the sale, how long would even Slavery itself continue to exist in those States?

Is this legislation needed to meet the case of any offenders in the M. E. Church who cannot be otherwise reached? or in other words, does mercenary slaveholding exist there so as to demand its enactment? I call the attention of brethren to this remarkable fact, that in all this debate no one has presented a single known case of this character; from no quarter has there been one fact of this description brought before us. Not one from any quarter? Farther, Sir, we have testimony from three unimpeached classes of witnesses, which, if it prove anything, goes very far to prove that, called as they have been to examine the question, they have not been able to discover that mercenary slaveholding exists among us at all. The first class comprises the brethren from the border conferences. They say that mercenary slaveholding does not find a home among us. If I have been correctly informed, they have given such testimony that the very brethren who adopted the majority report in committee, state that they want no better anti-slavery men than those border brethren are, that the practice in the border conferences is all they ask for. And we believe them—we believe that what our brethren from the border have spoken on this subject they have spoken honestly and truthfully.

The second class of testimony is that which we have received from our honored bench of Bishops, and we should remember, Mr. President, that you have been among them, in those conferences which occupy slaveholding territory; you have presided at their sessions, preached in their churches, and visited them at their homes. You tell us, Sir, as the result of your observations, that our church, as it exists there, does not tend to extend or perpetuate Slavery; that the people who belong to us are mostly poor, and therefore, I suppose not likely to be slaveholders at all; and then you show they are with us in our anti-slavery sentiment by referring to the otherwise inexplicable fact that, with another church in their midst, indetical, almost, with our own in doctrines and in usages, and only unlike on the single subject of Slavery, at the cost, in some instances, of sacrifice and persecution they have turned away from that organization and chosen their homes among us. The third class of witnesses is made up of the committee itself. They have not only come into the Conference without reporting a single case of mercenary slaveholding, as having come to their

knowledge, which, appointed as they have been, on the special subject, they certainly would have done if they had proof of its existence ; but they tell us in their report that they believe that the administration of discipline in the section of our work to which this legislation is designed especially to apply, have faithfully done all that, under their circumstances, they conscientiously believe they had the power to do, to answer the ends of the discipline in exterminating Slavery. Observe : they not merely carried out the forms of law on the subject, but they have done all they conscientiously believed they had the power to do to answer the ends of discipline in exterminating Slavery ; and now I submit that looking at the testimony of these three classes of witnesses, altogether unimpeachable in their character, is it not a proof that there is not among us a class of offenders whose case calls for this legislation. Again, is it so important to express our practice by legal enactments that this legislation ought to be adopted on that account ? Look at that principle and see what it contains. Have a legal enactment in the book to express every thing we do ! How long, if this be correct, will the Book of Discipline be the wise little book we are accustomed to call it ? Why, sir, it would soon swell into a great ponderous tome ; nay, one would not be enough, we should have volume after volume. But it is not necessary to dwell upon this ; the committee abandon the principle themselves almost as soon as they state it, in two of the very instances which they adduce to show how far the law is below the practice. They say :

The Discipline does not, in express terms, make the slaveholder ineligible to the episcopacy, and yet the General Conference of '44 considered itself justified, both by the spirit of the Discipline, and the acknowledged practice of the church, in affirming that the relation of slaveholder was a disqualification for the office of a bishop, and this it did at the expense of an ever-to-be-regretted division of our ecclesiastical organization. The Discipline declares, that "when any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives, but the administration assuming that legal emancipation, in the case of traveling preachers universally

practicable, does not admit a slaveholder to the itinerant connection.

They adduce these instances as examples of the fact which they allege. But do they pretend to introduce statutes which shall bring the law up to the usage? No, sir, not at all. And why not? Because such a law would have no practical application, and if the reasoning be good in these cases, I maintain that it would be equally good in the other. Now, then, as has been remarked, this legislation is not needed, because the M. E. Church has so cherished the sin of Slavery as to induce God to withdraw the light of his approving countenance from her; if it is not needed in order that the principle of property in man may be condemned by our laws; if it is not needed to meet the case of a class of offenders in the Church who cannot otherwise be reached, and if the principle is not sound that we must make our laws express everything we practice as a Church, then I submit that the position is sustained that the legislation does not possess the positive merit of being called for to remedy any existing law in the Church.

And now this being made manifest, what is the aspect in which we are here presented? We are here the representatives of the most powerful Church in the United States, met as their supreme legislative body. Germany comes pleading for aid: California, Oregon, and the islands of the sea say: "Come and help us." Ethiopia stretches out her hands.—God in his providence is setting open doors before us, and in every part of the world he seems to be saying to us, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—And what are we doing? Why, sir, we are here with the whole wheel-work of our legislation standing still for days, it may be for weeks, that we may hack down a man of straw. But it may be said there is a great fundamental principle of hostility to Slavery itself, which cannot be too often asserted. True, sir; but then this is not the place to introduce fundamental principles into statute law. Fundamental principles belong to a bill of rights, to the constitution and statute. Law is a specific act, designed to meet particular classes of offences. It may be said that this is only testimony against the evil of Slavery, and that something must be done to satisfy the feelings of our people in the North.—

I answer that is not the way to do either, and that to do of them in this way is to bring ourselves under the condemnation of that very brutal remark of the Committee in their report—the applicability of which, by the way, in the connection in which they use it, I cannot for the life of me see, but which is strikingly applicable here, viz : “that to say one thing and mean another, is in all cases of doubtful expediency, and of as doubtful morality.” To mean *testimony*, and to say *law*, is surely to say one thing and mean another.—To mean to satisfy our people in the North when we say we give a *rule* to our people of the South, is to mean one thing and say another. To mean, if I may so speak, to give our people in the North bread, and then to say and to give our people on the border a stone, is certainly to say one thing and to mean another.

I agree with the Committee fully, that “to say one thing and mean another, is in all cases of doubtful expediency, as well as of doubtful morality. I know, Mr. President, it is very difficult to divest ourselves of an idea which we long cherished, especially when that idea has been something of a pet with us, and has become something of a hobby. Even after clearer light has come into the mind, and our error stands openly exposed, the old prejudice will linger around the heart, and emotions almost usurp the control of the judgment ; the new views appear something like a dream to us ; we are almost afraid to trust them against convictions we have long entertained, even although those convictions rested upon what we now see to have been partial or mistaken information ; but it is our duty to subdue those prejudices, and to act in accordance with the truth subsequently made plain to us. Therefore, sir, as our brethren who have come here from the east, and north, and west, have discovered that the very basis of anti-slavery agitation in our Church, i. e., mercenary slaveholding, does not exist among us, I insist that this old opinion should be modified, and action to be correspondingly changed.

Mr. M. here adduced an amusing illustration of the tenacity with which an old idea is sometimes cherished, and then proceeded to remark :

That while the proposed legislation did not possess the positive merit of being adapted to remedy any existing

wrong, neither did it have the negative recommendation of doing no harm. Humanity will not permit me to sanction it. Observe in the second answer of the chapter presented ; it is provided that whenever a member of our Church, by any means, comes in possession of a slave, a committee is to be called to fix a time at which he shall be made free.— Now, in looking about for a rule to govern them in this, will they not be likely to feel that the first answer, when anticipation is to follow, where it can, without injury to the slave, is their rule. Now, suppose a case of this description. I am a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in slave territory. A poor black, who is the husband of a woman belonging to some other master than his own, is about to be sold—he knows not where—it may be to be carried to the far South ; he comes to me and asks me to buy him to save him from separation from his wife and children—says he will stay with me and work out the balance of his freedom. But I look at that provision which demands emancipation, where it can be done without injury to his interests, and provides no guard for mine. I say to him, “I should like help you, but I am not able. I could not afford to lose my money ; I have a wife and children of my own to whom I owe my first duty to provide for them, and as I am a member of the M. E. Church, and should be expelled if I did not obey the decision of the committee, much as I may feel for you, I cannot take the risk.” Is not this the natural effect which would be produced in such a case by the proposed law ?

Again : my *loyalty to Christ*, as I understand it, forbids that I should sanction its enactment. I hold, and we see that the souls of the poor blacks, even though they be bondmen in the South, are as dear to our Lord and Master, as my soul or yours ; that his heart was as much fixed upon them when he bled upon the cross as upon ours. We hold further, that it is as necessary for them to hear the Gospel, in order to be saved, as for us. Now, we do not know that if we pass the contemplated enactment, our access to them will be hindered ; that masters who are not with us in sentiment will, perhaps, regard us in the light of a description of abolition agents, and shunt us off of their plantations and farms, and keep the negroes away from us, so that we cannot publish among them the story of the cross, and win them as

trophies for the Savior? My loyalty to Christ will not permit me to favor this legislation.

*Loyalty to the Church*, as I understand it, will not permit me to sanction it. I respect other Churches; I cherish for them feelings of the most profound regard, but I think it is not wrong for me to feel a stronger attachment to the Church of my choice than to any other. This measure would damage us in the South. Pass it, and our brethren in the border Conferences will find, as we have reason to fear, their influence impaired, if not destroyed; their numbers lessening, their congregations dwindling, and the Church South coming up strong and mighty, securing the hold upon the public they formerly had, and wresting from them territory which they formerly occupied as an integral part of our body. My loyalty to my own Church will not permit me to sanction anything which threatens to do this, neither will it permit me to sanction anything which will put an *influence* of jeopardy as this proposed measure will in the North. We all know that the great question which we have had before us for days is now one of the most exciting elements in the political canvass, and every man knows it will be impossible for us to touch that question without producing excitement; and if we take this step, unless we have a clear case of conscience to support us, it will be impossible for us to justify ourselves to the satisfaction of a very large and highly respectable portion of the population at the North, or to avoid risking our influence with them, and with whom our influence is in the highest degree desirable. They will regard this legislation as lending aid and comfort to their enemies, in the present struggle, in an unjust and ungenerous manner, which they will find it difficult to forgive. Again, it will shake the confidence of many of our best members in all parts of our Church. They have not all of them Emory's History of the Discipline as we have, are not as capable, perhaps of perceiving distinctions as minute as the ninth part of a hair as some here may be. After a proposition tantamount to this has been passed around the Conference as an amendment to the Constitution, and failed to secure the requisite support, it will be impossible to convince them that violence has not been done to their rights, which will lamentably shake their faith in the men who compose the supreme legislative body of the Church. (He here mentioned a case.) There are hun

dreds of such judicious and intelligent men all over the territory, and to shake their confidence would be indeed to inflict a fatal blow on the Church.

But it is said, if do we not adopt the Majority Report, we stand upon the ground of expediency—that we descend from the sublime heights of justice and truth, and we come down, down, oh ! how far, and when we get there, sir, who do find standing by our side, upon the same platform with us ? Who said “all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient?” Who said—

Here Dr. Raymond rose to explain. He said he spoke of an expediency as standing over against and opposed to what is right, and that which was right would be expedient, and vice versa, what is expedient under certain circumstances would be right. He had more respect for his own common sense than to take any other view of this subject. He protested in being understood in such a sense as that imputed to him. He asked if the definition he had given was right.

Mr. Monroe resumed :

Again, it is said that to oppose measures of this kind is to become apologists for Slavery. But how so ? Was Lamar-tine an apologist for tyranny when he held the Parisian mob at bay, when they were thirsting for the blood of those they considered their oppressors, pleading for the live-long day and prevailing with them—was he the apologist of tyranny ? No, sir. He was the defender of law. And, sir, even if mercenary slaveholding was in the Church (which we do not admit,) yet even if it was, in resisting an unconstitutional measure we are not apologists for Slavery, but we too are defenders of law. And to set aside thus the Constitution would expose too many other interests to peril to permit us to consent to it, to gain even a desirable end.

Again, it is said that if we do not adopt some measure of this character we shall have trouble among our people in the North. But suppose our brethren go home and tell their people that the very basis of this legislation has no existence—that coming up here, they found that our brethren of the border were anti-Slavery—that mercenary slaveholding does not exist among them. The belief that it does has created this excitement. Statements have been made and circulated which lead them to believe that all the enormities of the system were in the bosom of our Church. This has flooded our

tables with petitions and memorials. Now, let our brethren tell them frankly and honestly that this is a mistake, and having the confidence of their people they will be believed, and the excitement will subside.

The shadow of one other thing rises up. It is not openly spoken in debate of course, but it floats about in the atmosphere, that if certain brethren do not vote for the report, they must expect when they get home to find the heavy hand of those who sent them coming down upon them in punishment. If I stood in such a position, sir, I should regard such a suggestion as an insult to myself and to those whom I represent ; an insult to myself because it would intimate that I could be influenced to act otherwise than in accordance with the dictates of light and truth, by the thoughts of injurious results to myself personally, and an insult to those I represent because it implied that they wished me to act otherwise than in accordance with my honest convictions.

Mr. Pilcher, of North Ohio, addressed the Conference.

MR. PRESIDENT :—He would not afflict this body with a long speech. He must say, however, that he was at a loss to know exactly what ground to occupy, in consequence of the wide range that has been taken by the speaker who had preceded him. He said that by a resolution of the Conference it was agreed to take up the second resolution of the majority report of the committee on Slavery ; and yet, by common consent, the merits of the first resolution had occupied the greatest portion of time by most of the speakers. He said he would therefore direct their attention to a few thoughts on the second resolution, which contemplated a change of the chapter in the Discipline on Slavery. He would not tax their patience at that stage of the debate, but had sat and listened to so many long and eloquent speeches on the subject, that his intellectual and physical energies had been overtaxed to such an extent that he was afraid that he should become dyspeptic unless he should be relived by the exercise of a short speech.

From the latitude which had been taken on the subject, if there was not some time set for the closing this discussion they might stay there forever. He said he might be permitted to take as wide a range as others had done, and what he might fail to say in the limited time he had allowed to himself on that General Conference floor, he might say in

a written article after his return home. At present, he could not see no land *ahead*. Our present position reminded him of a ship, stately and tall, launched out upon a broad ocean, without compass or rudder, driven by the fury of the tempest—without any hope of a safe landing. Most of the speakers, instead of discussing the second resolution in the report, which was the subject of debate before this body, have either thrown the force of their arguments on to the first resolution or to an eloquent exposition of the abstract question of Slavery. In view of his obligations to God and the church, he could not vote for the resolution on the chapter, because, in his humble opinion, it interposed a barrier to the universal extension of the gospel, and is in controversion of the organic law of our church. But brethren say, they are justified in their action although it may close up the door of access to the South or any portion of it—if they are persecuted in one city they flee into another. But he would remind those brethren that if by an unjustifiable act of their own they close the door of access, they may not claim the sympathies due to the persecuted or the protection of God's promise. Such being the tendency of the resolution, he could not endorse it. Let the gospel, committed to the ministry, go untrammelled. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." The gospel should be proclaimed, North and South, East and West. It will accomplish the grand work of the world's salvation. But some might charge him with being a pro-slavery man, but he would repel the insinuation and would throw it back with indignation. We are all anti-slavery men, though we may differ as to the mode of operation by which the great evil of Slavery is to be subverted. Was he to be branded with pro-slaveryism? No sir, once for all, now and forever, he was an anti-slavery man. He believed with St. Paul, "all things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." He believed, we should advance cautiously in every thing that contemplates a change in the organic law of the church.—Brethren seemed to be alarmed about the state of the church, and that something must be done. He did not see that the darkening clouds of God's vengeance were lowering over us. Our borders have been enlarged and our tents increased.—There had been a long drouth—all things appeared to be

drooping and dying, but such was not the case now. He would not say, we had done nothing but we have done much. One thing afflicted him—some of the most eloquent orators had portrayed all the horrors of Slavery without touching the present question. He was ready to vote and to vote on the right side of this question. When he came to the first resolution, he knew how he would vote and he would now tell them for a nine-pence. He thought men in their efforts at progress began at the wrong end. He believed we should first preach the pure gospel and God would see to it that the end was accomplished. We cannot legislate men into religion. He went in for leaving the chapter as it is because he would not override the constitution. He felt sorry for those who seemed to feel as bad as some of them did, so he would leave the floor for them and give them a chance to relieve themselves.

Mr. Slicer addressed the conference and said :

I am aware, Mr. President, said Mr. S., that this Conference is not in a state of mind or feeling to listen to any protracted remarks.

The Conference which I have the honor, in part, to represent, is represented here by fifteen delegates, and has a membership of 75,000, white and colored. The peculiar position which we occupy, the weight of the body to which we belong, the largeness of our colored membership, each and all combined, furnish reasons why we should be fully heard on this vexed and perplexing question.

Need I say, sir, that we are not pro-slavery? Need I say that we publicly avow our adherence to the authorized standard found in our Discipline. We are not here to ask for changes. We are not here to promote agitation, but to allay strife, and to stand firmly upon the platform of the Discipline as it is.

This debate has taken a wide range, and a little of almost everything has been brought into this discussion. We have "idolatry," "political organizations," "polygamy," (indeed, sir, there has appeared a remarkable proclivity of mind in that direction.) We have had "the stiletto in the bosom of 'free Kansas," and "the skeleton, bloody hand of Slavery shaken over the North, and making an impression upon the whole country, and moving the popular heart until it heaves as the billows of the ocean"—and we have been called upon

to rally, for the purpose of "wiping out the foul blot" and removing "this sum of all villainies" from the nation.

The Bible has been quoted from Genesis almost to the Apocalypse, and I despair, Mr. President, of being able to follow the speakers in all their wanderings from the subject under discussion.

I desire, Mr. President, to call the attention of this General Conference to two general propositions :

First, That we have no right to do, under existing circumstances, what is proposed to be done. And secondly, That to do it, would be of most mischievous and destructive tendency. And further I wish to say, that whatever has been done, in this or any other country, heretofore, in regard to the efficient management of this delicate question, has been done not by rash, precipitate, or destructive efforts.

I wish, sir, to enter a short caveat against this proposed measure, and I hope if brethren will not hear for the sake of the white men on our border, they will at least for the love they bear to the colored man, listen to what we may have to say.

Whenever the Church or the country manifests a disposition to trifle with organic law, good ground is furnished for suspicion and alarm ; and if we are prepared to go against the judgment of the wisest and best men of the Church in all time past—and against the powerful argument read upon this floor to-day—and also against the judgment of the Bishops, who have expressed the opinion that we have not the constitutional vote required to make such a change—we shall do incalculable mischief throughout our whole connection.

Once let the principle be adopted that a bare majority vote, can set aside the constitution by riding down its restrictions, and in 1860, our people may bid farewell to the Restrictive Rules on page 33 of our Discipline, by which even the rights of a minority are guarded from invasion.

The wise men who framed our civil government, and constituted it a government of limited powers, guarded with jealous care the rights of minorities, and of the smaller States, by giving them an equal representation in the United States Senate, so as to make little Delaware equal to the great State of New York in the number of their Senators. And following this example, the fathers of our Church, not only placed these restrictions upon the power of the General Con-

ference, but also gave to each Annual Conference, however small, the right to have two delegates upon this floor.

Let a bare majority rule, and we may in 1860, if that majority shall please, have an "Itinerant General Superintency" superceded by a Diocesan Episcopacy, and our wide-spread field of labor parceled out into many separate jurisdictions—for we have been told upon the floor of the present General Conference that "we are tired of being bound up, or tied down by constitutional restrictions."

Let a majority suffice to lay aside the restriction of our Discipline and when that majority shall find it convenient they may deprive our ministers and members of the right of trial by committee, and an appeal. And by the same process the General Conference may squander the capital and proceeds of the Book Concern upon objects foreign to those for which it was established.

Let a bare majority to-day override the restriction, and virtually make a new term or condition of membership in our Church, as is proposed by the Majority Report now before this Conference—thus setting aside the organic law of the Church—and you will shake the confidence of our whole people, and spread consternation and alarm through all our borders. For when our people discover that you have done by indirection, what you were not allowed to do directly, upon the subject of Slavery, they will expect whenever under the pressure of popular clamor produced by any other cause, you may find it convenient to do so, that your constitution will be torn to shreds and their dearest rights trampled in the dust.

It is alleged in the Report, and it has been asserted in this debate, that while the General Rule "forbids the buying and selling" of slaves, that it therefore forbids the holding or ownership of slaves.

It is a wise maxim of civil law, that the law is to be interpreted by the framers of the law, and by the practice under the law immediately succeeding its enactment. This is a fair principle of construction, or method of interpretation—and to show that this principle has been recognised by the highest Judicial authority of this country, I beg leave to call the attention of the Conference to Cranch's Reports, page 97. In the case of *Stewart vs Leaird*, Mr. Chief Justice Marshall had tried this cause in the court below—the Judgment was affirmed—and Mr. Justice Patterson in delivering the opinion of the Supreme Court, said :

"To this objection, which is of recent date, it is sufficient to observe that practice and acquiescence under it (the Law) for a period of several years, commencing with the organization of the judicial system, afford an irresistible answer, and have indeed fixed the construction. It is a contemporary interpretation of the most forcible nature. This practical exposition is too strong and obstinate to be shaken or con-

trolled. Of course, the question is at rest, and ought not now to be disturbed."

The General Rule of the Discipline on Slavery, is to be subjected to this rule of construction—"the practice and acquiescence" under it, when the administration was in the hands of those venerable men who framed the Rule.

The first notice which we have of the General Rule on Slavery is in 1789—(for it will be borne in mind, that it was not one of Mr. Wesley's original Rules.) And when we look at the contemporaneous practice of the fathers, this practice is found to settle the matter unquestionably and undeniably, that the rule on Slavery was not intended to apply to simple slaveholding, but to the buying and selling of slaves.

Even when previously, at the Christmas Conference of 1784, they adopted the Rule (which they found it necessary immediately to suspend,) even then, in a N. B. they said that the Rule of gradual emancipation, which they had then adopted, "should affect the members of our society no farther than as they are consistent with laws of the States in which they reside." Our fathers always advised the use of "wise and prudent means," in dealing with this subject.

I must now turn my attention to my friend Dr. Thomas, and make a short answer to his remarks upon Slavery as it existed in the days of Abraham, and the Hebrews. I should have been better pleased with the Doctor, if, after telling us that Abraham had servants, "born in his house and bought with his money," he had not undertaken to prove in the face of the passage, that what was bought with Abraham's money was not property, and that those servants were not slaves. The reasoning of the Doctor in this cause is not such as I had expected from him, knowing as I do his intelligence and learning. He concludes, as I think, illogically, that because as he says, "when Abraham armed three hundred of his household servants, they were not held as property," and he said he could convince all that Abraham armed his slaves three hundred strong, and marched them into a hostile territory, and then marched them back." "In the name of common sense," said he, "how could he have found his way back a slaveholder? Suppose he had had slaves such as the southern slaveholders have, could he have done this?"

Now, Mr. President, this reasoning strikes me as being

peculiar. If, when Abraham went out to rescue his nephew Lot from the confederate kings, his three hundred slaves found themselves in the midst of "a hostile territory," that of itself would furnish a good reason why they should not turn "fugitives" among hostile pagans by forsaking a kind and devotedly pious master. I should conclude that the strong sympathy and affection which existed between "the father of the faithful," "the friend of God," and his armed slaves, which induced the latter to peril their lives in the rescue of their master's relative, would furnish a much better reason why they did not abscond among hostile strangers, than the one given by my learned friend.

Again, sir, it has been no uncommon thing for slaves to accompany their masters to the battle-field, and to return from the dangers and toils of war to their quiet and comfortable homes—it was so with our Washington and his slaves, in the first war of Independence, and also with the hero of New Orleans and his slaves in the second war of Independence.

The Dr next alluded to the Slavery among the Hebrews, and spoke of the prohibition to surrender fugitives. We were not informed, as we should have been, that while the Hebrews were not allowed to enslave Hebrews, they were allowed to make slaves of the heathen—and while the sabbatic (or 7th) year was a year of release to the Hebrew servant, that arrangement did not extend to the pagan slaves. I refer, for the law, to Leviticus xxv, 44, 45, where you will observe that while the Hebrew servant is bought for six years, the heathen is called a "bondsmen," and a "possession," and an "inheritance."

In regard to the fugitive slave law of the Hebrews, the Dr. has remarked, that "if a fugitive slave came into the country, the commonwealth was pledged to prevent his being re-captured."

I do not perceive the bearing or reference of this matter to the subject before the Conference, but if you will indulge me, I will ask your attention while I read a passage from that great Biblical scholar, Moses Stuart, of Massachusetts, whose authority ought to be good on such a question.

I quote from "Bledsoe's Liberty and Slavery." Page 155: "The first inquiry of course is," says this learned divine, "in regard to those very words, where does his master live?"

among Hebrews, or among foreigners? The language of the passage fully developes this and answers the question. He has escaped from his master unto the Hebrews; (the text says *thee*, i. e., Israel;) he shall dwell with thee, even among you, in one of thy gates. Of course, then, he is an emigrant, and did not dwell among them, before his flight. If he had been a Hebrew servant, belonging to a Hebrew, the whole face of the thing would be changed. Restoration, or restitution, if we may judge by the tenor of other property-laws among the Hebrews, would have surely been enjoined. But, be that as it may, the language of the text puts it beyond a doubt that the servant is a foreigner, and has fled from a heathen master. This entirely changes the complexion of the case. The Hebrews were God's chosen people, and were the only nation on earth which worshiped the only living and true God. In case a slave escaped from them (the heathens,) and came to the Hebrews, two things were to be taken into consideration, according to the views of the Jewish legislation. The first was that the treatment of slaves among the heathens was far more severe and rigorous than it could lawfully be under the Mosaic law. The heathen master possessed the power of life and death, of scourging and imprisoning, of putting to excessive toil, even to any extent that he pleased. Not so among the Hebrews. Humanity pleaded there for the protection of the fugitive — The second and most important consideration was, that only among the Hebrews could the fugitive slave come to the knowledge and worship of the only living and true God."

And I need only add, Mr. President, that it is not very likely that there existed between the Hebrews and the heathen nations surrounding them, any solemn engagements, such as "constitutional obligations," to deliver up "fugitives from labor."

I regret that Dr. T. has thought proper, in allusion to the case of Onesimus, the fugitive slave of Philemon, converted at Rome by the ministry of St. Paul, to make such exceptionable reference to the authorities of the Government of the United States. He asks, "Do you believe that Onesimus was a slave? If so, how did the Apostle get him back? If Paul had been a United States District Judge, with Marshals at his back, and secret service money at his command, he might get him back."

I do not presume to enter into the discussion of the meaning of the Greek term (*Doulos*) which has so much occupied the Drs. of Divinity, Professors in Colleges, and the church papers of late. I will only say, that as far as I know, the concurrent testimony of Commentators and Lexicographers, from McKnight, Donnegan, and Dr. Robinson down, has interpreted it to mean a *bondsman*, the opposite of a *freeman*. There never was, so far as I know, an effort to construe it otherwise, until it was necessary to serve a purpose. You were told by my learned friend, that Onesimus was a "runaway apprentice." The same kind of interpretation might construe the language of St. Paul, in Gal. iv. 22. "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman." Thus, according to such a rendering, "Abraham had two sons, the one by a free woman, the other by a hired girl" St. Peter has said that "the unlearned and unstable wrest the Scriptures;" but it was reserved for modern times to present the learned D. D's. wrsting plain Scriptures, the meaning of which, the common sense of mankind had settled centuries ago. But, sir, a truce to this reference to the Scriptures, which I should not have made, but for the purpose of following those who went before me in this debate.

A great deal, Mr. President has been said here which, if reported upon our border, must do incalculable mischief. We have had such predictions of evil—such an arraignment of Bishop Asbury and the Fathers—such representations of Slavery—making it out to be worse than Idolatry, Polygamy, or any of the blackest crimes known among Jews, Mahomedans, or Pagans—comparing slaveholders to thieves, &c.—that these things must make difficulty among our people, especially on the border, and weaken the hands of those who have firmly stood by the interests of the M. E. Church, and this opinion will be corroborated by each and all of my colleagues on this floor.

My friends Dr. Hodgson, read from Dr. Elliott's work in regard to the Wesleyan Missionaries in the British West Indies. I propose, Mr. President, to call further attention to the same subject, that this Conference may see what line of policy was pursued by the Wesleyan Missionaries, under the instructions and direction of the Reverend Richard Watson, and the wisest and best men in the Wesleyan connection. 1

hold in my hand the London Missionary Reports of 1834, and I read from pages twelve and thirteen to show how earnestly our brethren there pursued the great object of their Mission, the salvation of the slaves and their masters, and how studiously they avoided everything which might, by possibility, embarrass them in their work, and hinder the accomplishment of their heaven inspired purposes. I read from Instruction No. 6, as follows :

"As, in the Colonies in which you are called to labor, a great portion of the inhabitants are in a state of Slavery, the Committee strongly call to your recollection what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted, as a Missionary to the West Indies, that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves, to whom you have access, without, in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition. On all persons in the state of slaves, you are diligently and explicitly to enforce the same exhortations which the apostles of the Lord administered to the slaves of ancient nations, where, by their ministry, they embrace christianity : Ephesians, 6th chapt., 5th and 8th verses, "Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh," &c. Coloss. 3d chapt., 22d and 25th verses, "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh," &c.

Mr. Watson calls the persons addressed "Slaves of ancient nations." I suppose that his scholarship will hardly be questioned by the learned doctors who have been laboring over the word *Doulos*, (for the last twelve months,) in the connection of that word with the controversy on domestic slavery.

Instruction 9 is in the words following :

"The Committee cautions you against engaging in any of the civil disputes or local politics of the Colony to which you may be appointed, either verbally, or by correspondence with any person at home, or in the Colonies. The whole period of your temporary residence in the West Indies is to be filled up with the proper work of your mission—to be intent upon the solemn work of your office, and upon that eternal state, in the views of which the Committee trust you will ever think and act."

And to show how earnest those wise men were in carrying

out the policy they had adopted, I quote a part of Instruction 11, in words following :

“The instructions under this and under the former heads, are to be read over annually at the meeting of every District Committee by the chairman ; who is to inquire whether they have been observed on the part of the brethren ; and the answer shall be reported in the District Minutes regularly, and with them transmitted to the Committee in London. Every Superintendent is not only charged with the observance of them himself, but is reponsible, as far as may be, for their observance by the brethren under his direction, or for an immediate report to the District, or to the Managing Committee in London, in any case in which they may have been violated.”

This is the method taken by the immediate successors of Mr. Wesley, in the management of this delicate subject.—They did not interfere with the “civil condition of the slave” but following the example of our Lord and his Apostles, they preached the gospel to masters and slaves—they sowed broadcast the seed of life—“hid the leaven” of truth in the mass of humanity—inaugurated a process of Christian civilization, preparatory to the accomplishment of West India emancipation, which was consummated some 70 years after the introduction of Methodism into the Island.

The Act of Emancipation was passed by the British Parliament, and in the fact of the indemnity to the owners, in the sum of one hundred millions of dollars, was entirely unlike anything proposed by those who agitate the subject of immediate emancipation in this country.

And then it is further to be considered that the parties passing the Emancipation Act, had between them and the Islands having Slavery, the waters of the broad Atlantic—they were not in immediate contact with three millions of colored population, as are the people of the Southern States of this Union.

What good, I ask, either to master or slave, is to be effected by the adoption of the measure before the Conference? Have we any power to pass Emancipation acts?—Have we millions to indemnify owners? Congress itself has not the power to liberate a single slave. Has not the highest judicatory of the country decided that Slavery is a State institution? The measure before us speaks of “mercenary

slaveholding"—cannot this Conference perceive that in an attempt to make non-slaveholding a test of Church membership, that the effect would be to induce the mercenary slaveholder to put the price of his slaves in his pocket, and by that act tear asunder the ties of husband and wife, parents and children—there might be a change of owners—but such a measure would break no man's chain, and lighten no man's burden—the effect would be evil, and only evil, and that continually. Slavery does not depend upon your action. It is interwoven with civil society, and no action of the Church can effect it in the least, except that which is enjoined by Christ and his Apostles. We have heard a great deal about the law of love. If any one will put his finger on a single passage in the New Testament which teaches in words that the relation of master and slave is a sinful relation, we would like to see it. Mark, I do not say Christianity advocated Slavery, nor do I say Christianity tolerated it, nor did I seek to overthrow it, except by the wise and prudent measures ordained by Christ and his Apostles. The Apostles went everywhere, throughout the Roman Empire, and sowed broadcast the seeds of truth, expecting that it would spring up, and bring forth fruit. They did not attack the law, nor seek to overthrow the civil institutions of the Empire. The New Testament contains no particular form of Government. It has left it with the people to enact such a form as they judge most expedient. Thank God Christianity flourishes under Government under which she is allowed to open her mission, whether it be a Despotism, Republicanism, or a pure Democracy. Wherever she has leave to open her mission she goes forth, preaching liberty in the highest sense, to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to those that are bound. Christianity sought not to counteract or undermine, or sap the foundations of the Government, but conformed to the laws of the land. Our blessed Savior himself was so scrupulous and careful that when he was asked about the tribute money, whether it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, he would not answer. He saw the craft of his enemies. Should he answer one way he would be embroiled with the Jews, should he answer another way, he would array himself against the government. "Show me," said he, "a penny. Whose image and superscription is this?" They answered, "Cæsars." "Render, therefore," said he, "unto

Cæsar the things that are Cæsars, and unto God the things that are God's." It is well known that the superscription of the king was put upon the coin of the country, and hence the answer.

Christianity is not an apologist for Slavery, and while it publishes no toleration of Slavery, neither does it seek directly to attack it—but in its progress it seeks to counter-work every species of evil.

It went forth with one single aim, proclaiming "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;" and what was the effect? Why the fact is that in the Roman Empire in the course of seven hundred years the power of Slavery was broken, and after the lapse of one thousand years it ceased throughout the Empire. We have been told by Dr. Thompson that "Slavery has been in this country three hundred years, and the horrid system has been growing worse and worse." I do not think the Pilgrim Fathers brought any slaves to Plymouth Rock, and it has not been quite two hundred and fifty years since they landed there. Things are growing worse and worse, are they? Well we will take a look at this matter. A reference to figures will show that the reverse is the fact, the converse of which Dr. Thompson stated, is true.

Dr. Thompson rose here and remarked that his statement referred to the increase of the slave power.

Mr. S. replied—The history of the country will show that he is wrong.

Dr. T.—What do you mean by country?

Mr. S.—I mean the United States of course. We have had vivid pictures drawn here representing "the slave power" as having its foot upon the neck of freedom and shaking its bloody skeleton hand threatening to overrun all the States in the Union.

[True, true, here was uttered by several voices.]

Well, we shall see whether it is true or not. I, said Mr. S., do not believe one word of it. But to the facts. In 1789, twelve-thirteenths of all the States had slaves in their borders. If any of you dispute this fact I should like to hear from you. When the controversy came up in relation to the prospective extinction of the slave-trade, limiting it to 1808 through a period of twenty consecutive years, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, voted to terminate the slave trade in 1800; but Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire voted with Georgia and South Carolina, and carried the question of the extension of the slave trade to 1808. (Here a voice said, "It was cotton did it.") I guess, replied Mr. S., that you had not gotten the spinning jennies to work, so early as that. I do not blame New England for voting with Georgia and South Carolina in the matter; they believed that the formation "of a more perfect union" to "provide for the com-

mon defence" and "promote the general welfare," and "to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our Posterity," greatly to be desired. If the States of New England had not met the other States in a spirit of compromise, but had held off, the union could not have been formed. I do not blame her. And I hope the brothers who are so sensitive whenever I refer to New England, will not be disturbed by this statement of the truth, as I am not in any respect answerable for facts of history.

I repeat that twelve-thirteenths of the States held slaves, at the adoption of the Constitution.

If reference is had to the debates in the first Congress in 1790, it will be found that upon the presentation of a petition from Benjamin Franklin and others, and also one from the friends of Pennsylvania in relation to the abolition of the slave trade—the answer early given was, that Congress had no power to grant the prayer of petitioners earlier than 1808—and that all that could be done was to embarrass the trade by a *per capita* tax of \$10 on all future importations of slaves.

How do the figures stand, in 1790, the year after the constitution was adopted. By reference to statistics of population of that time, as compared with the statistics of 1850, it will be seen that our friends are not likely to be overwhelmed, and swallowed up with Slavery. I will quote the figures as found in "Colton's Atlas of the World; from this it will be seen, that instead of freedom going backward, six, states have become free of the original thirteen, and in addition, we have the great free States formed from the North-Western Territory out of the soil ceded by Virginia.

But how stands the population, the free as comparad to the slave at the two periods named.

Population of the United States in 1790—whites 3,172,464; free colored, 59,446; slaves 697,897, or about five whites to one slave, and one free colored to eleven slaves.

In 1850—whites 19,558,068; free colored 334,495; slaves 3,204,313; or about six whites to one slave, and seven slaves to one free colored.

How you see that free colored people have increased to nearly half a million—while the disproportion of slaves to the white and free colored population is greatly increased since 1790.

Emancipation has progressed from New England to the line of Delaware, where the slave population is sparse, and slavery exists in its mildest form. The States where emancipation has been effected, did it themselves without the aid of mischievous intermeddlers who had no jurisdiction over the subject. And but for the rashness and inconsiderate zeal of outside agitators, the progress of emancipation would have been much greater than it has been for the last thirty years.

From the inauguration of associated abolition action, at Boston

in 1832, to this hour, but little or less than nothing has been done—the motion has been retrograde—this is true in regard to Kentucky, Maryland, and Virginia. In each of those States before the period named, the tendency among statesmen and christians was fully and freely to discuss the subject of emancipation and to indulge hopes of its early accomplishment; but it at length became the fashion to circulate inflammatory publications and exciting pictures through the mails, and to deal in denunciations against Slavery, and even pronounced the constitution framed by the wisdom of our fathers to be “a refuge of lies—an agreement with hell, and a covenant with death.” The public mind of the slave States became inflamed; and although Kentucky’s favorite son put himself at the head of the emancipation movement in 1849, in that State, yet his name, though “a tower of strength,” was scarcely sufficient to prevent the defeat of a single emancipation candidate for the Convention, and whoever will be at the pains to consult the present laws of Kentucky, will perceive that the whole subject is in a worse condition there, than it was a quarter of a century ago. I refer to the Revised Statutes of Kentucky, 1852, page 643 to 648.

Slavery is not however destined to be perpetual in this country; a great deal has been done for the colored people of the United States, by the mild subduing power of the gospel—and he thanked God that he looked forward to the day, when freedom should be universal, and christianity will have worked out her legitimate results, and the clank of the last chain shall be heard, and the last groan of oppressed humanity die away. But rashness, denunciation and violence will accomplish nothing towards bringing about this great consummation.

I will now attend for a moment to those who had rung the charges on the word “extirpation.” One of the speakers had treated lightly the Pastoral Address of the General Conference of 1836, in sneering at the manner in which our Church has extirpated Slavery. I am willing to endorse the Pastoral Address—will read its language from Bangs’ History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, page 550, vol 4th—read as follows from the Pastoral Address of the General Conference in 1836:

“It cannot be unknown to you that the question of Slavery in these United States, by the constitutional compact, which binds us together as a nation, is left to be regulated by the several State Legislatures themselves, and thereby is put beyond the control of the General Government as well as that of all other ecclesiastical bodies; it being manifest that in the slaveholding States themselves the entire responsibility of its existence or non-existence rests with those State Legislatures. Those facts, which are only mentioned here as a reason for the friendly advice which we wish to give you, constrain us as your Pastors, who are called to watch over your souls, as those who must give an account, to exhort you to

abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications, and especially from those of that inflammatory character which denounce in unmeasured terms those of their brethren who take the liberty to differ from them. Those of you who have honest scruples as to the lawfulness of Slavery, considered as an abstract principle of moral right and wrong if you must speak your sentiments, would do much better to express yourselves, in those terms of respect and affection, which evince a sincere sympathy for those of your brethren, who are necessarily, and in some instances reluctantly associated with Slavery in the States where it exists, than to indulge in harsh censures and denunciations, and in those of fruitless efforts which, instead of lightening the burden of the slave, only tend to make his condition the more irksome and distressing.

"From every view of the subject which we have been able to take, and from the most calm and dispassionate survey of the whole ground, we have come to the solemn conviction that the only safe, scriptural and prudent way for us, both as ministers and people, to take, is wholly to refrain from this agitating subject, which is now convulsing the country, and consequently the Church, from end to end, by calling forth inflammatory speeches, papers, and pamphlets.

"While we cheerfully accord to all such, all the sincerity they ask for their belief and motives, we cannot but disprove of their measures as alike destructive to the peace of the church, and to the happiness of the slave himself."

I believe, said Mr. S., that the Pastoral Address is as wise and wholesome in its advice now as in 1836.

That is the doctrine, that Slavery is a State Institution. The Church cannot abolish it, the Congress of the United States cannot free a single slave. Nothing has pained me so much during these debates as the attack on the Fathers of the Church, most of whom were in their graves before those who now arraign their motives and policy were born. Bishop Ashbury traveled through summers heat and winters cold, from Maine to Georgia, not as we do in the rail car at the rate of thirty miles an hour, but on horseback, thro' the paths of the wilderness, from the mountains to the rice plantations of the South. Our learned professors and presidents of Colleges, shut up in their cloisters, undertake to tell us that they have just as many facilities for forming a sound practical judgment in regard to this perplexing question as Mr. Asbury had, when he studied the practical workings of the Church in the cane brakes and rice fields. He (Mr. Asbury) was a brave man. He came and stood by our fathers in the storm of the revolutionary war, and

while others afrighted fled, he stood at his post of danger and duty. He traversed the country, and witnessed the conversion of thousands to God, both free and slaves ; and just forty years ago, in 1816, he sank quietly into his grave, in King George's county, Virginia,

"Like some broad river, widening toward the sea,  
Calmly and grandly life joined eternity."

Thus full of years, worn down with toil, the aged veteran of the cross laid him down to rest, and the tears of thousands, white and black, bedewed his grave.

Are we to be told by young men, that this apostle of Methodism "would weep if he were here and witnessed the effects of his policy"—the church involved as she is, and always has been with Slavery? Our fathers had grace enough to go back, when they took a wrong step. It is reported of Bishop McKendree that in administering comfort to an aged brother, who felt that he was pushed aside by some young brilliant preachers, said, "the young men are more eloquent, they can out-preach us and out vote us, but it is a great thing to have grace to retire with grace."—When our fathers found that the provisions of the Christmas Conference could not be carried out, they suspended those provisions for six months, and afterwards indefinitely.

Have I dreamed it, Mr. President? Is it so, that I stand here to defend these worthy men and their policy?—If Bishop Asbury, Dr. Coke, Freeborn, Garretson, Joshua Wells, Rozal and Pickerton must have their acts and policy called in question, let it be done by grey hairs, and not by young men who had not gotten out of their nurses arms when Bishop Asbury went to his reward. This aggressive spirit has no respect for age or experience.

The time was when Bishop Asbury could come down from the chair and offer a motion, and advocate it, too. We have, sir, a moderate Episcopacy. It is, I think, getting quite moderate, and more so every year. The Bishops now cannot even make a modest suggestion that the General Conference had not a constitutional right to make a new test of membership, but they must be bearded and charged with "pre-judging the question." And we not only hear of a disposition to over-ride the constitution, but we hear talk of "dissolving Conferences, such as the Missouri, Arkansas, and Kentucky," because, forsooth, it costs money to sustain

these Conferences. We have yet to learn that the souls of men are to be estimated by dollars and cents. It is alleged that they have had but a small increase. If you will look at the general minutes, you will find that two Conferences north of Mason and Dixon's line, on a basis of 31,000 members show a less increase of members than these poor Conferences do upon a basis of only 10,000 members. The Baltimore alone contributes annually to the Missionary Society near \$30,000, while there is allowed her for domestic missions the pitiful sum of \$2,250.

We who are on the border are a very unfortunate class of persons—not acceptable to extremists on either hand. On the one hand we are held to be abolitionists, and on the other charged with being pro-slavery. We stand, sir, where our fathers stood, upon the platform of the Constitution and the Discipline, and we think we are right, exactly right.

I once advised an arbitration between two church members, to settle a controversy about property. The arbitration was conducted as the Discipline directs, and when the award was rendered, it displeased both parties. I informed them that I was fully satisfied that the arbiters had done exact justice, but inasmuch as neither of them liked the award, I would see that they complied, or were excluded from the Church, according to the provisions of the Discipline. They did comply, and there was an end of the controversy.

This is just our case ; we cannot please the extremist of the South, and we cannot please our brethren East, North, and Northwest.

In this condition, if we should be driven to the wall, the injury and wrong must be upon those who have forced it upon us.

If our brethren will let us alone, and they want some outlet for their philanthropy, I would respectfully suggest to them to correct the social evils at their own doors ; this they can do legitimately, without disturbing the peace of the Church, or putting at hazard the integrity of the Union.

I know, Mr. President, that human nature is a "busy institution," and our brethren who will be doing something had better turn their attention to ameliorate the condition of the free colored population, and to the abolition of the Black Laws upon the statute books of the free States.

I wonder how much interest our Ohio brethren take in wiping from the statute books of that State the disgraceful statutes in relation to free blacks, which have only been expunged, as it were, yesterday.

And I should like to class-lead our zealous Indiana brethren, to ascertain how many of them voted for the exclusion of colored freemen from this State, when the clause in the Constitution received a majority of over one hundred thousand votes.

Here Dr. McClintock asked Mr. S. if he meant that the abolition of the black laws, was to be effected by the Conference?

By no means, said Mr. S., that is not the place ; I mean at the ballot box, in their capacity as citizens—Conferences have nothing to do with State laws, and I have only named the matter here in order to show our aggressive brethren that they have work enough at home, if they will do it, without troubling us about an evil, which we have no power to correct.

He was not done yet. He would ask his brethren from Vermont what they had done with their law for whipping strangers who would return to the State after being ordered out by the overseer of the poor.

Here a brother from Vermont said, he did not know of any such law.

Mr. S. replied, you may not know of it, and I hope it has been abolished, but it was on the statute book in 1808.—[Laws of Vermont, 1808, vol. 1, page 384 and 402.]

Mr. S. said, instead of exercising so much vicarious repentance about other men's sins within the slave States, he would exhort brethren to exercise patience and faith in those who have the management of our Church interests there.—He was afraid sometimes that these brethren did not think any of us a bit better than we ought to be. If they think, however, that they can manage better than we have done, (and will satisfy the Bishops of that,) I hope that they will be allowed to put their policy in operation on the border, by receiving transfers to our places.

Men, Mr. President, who find fault with the policy of Mr. Asbury and his successors, in the management of the question of Slavery, ought to know that shut up within the walls of a college, or placed hundreds of miles from the localities

of "the great evil," they have no more chance to form a sound practical judgment about the wise management of the question, than Mr. Asbury would have had to learn "experimental Chemistry," in the field of a cotton farm or a rice plantation.

The great success of Methodism in the United States, which is without a parallel on the face of the earth, is demonstrative of the wisdom of our conservative policy—rapidly as our population has increased in this God-favored land, our Church in this whole country (including the North and the South) has increased more rapidly than the population. I have a table prepared with great care by an intelligent gentleman of our church, which, for want of time, I will not detain the Conference by reading it. It shows an average increase population by decades, from 1790 to 1850, of 34.44 cts. per ct. An average increase of Methodism from 1790 to 1851 of 69.42 cts. per ct., being more than double—this includes simply the members of the Church North, South, East and West, and not the millions of those who attend the ministry of our Church, but are not members.

Now, sir shall we forsake our policy, which has demonstrated its utility and wisdom, and listen to adventurers, and enter upon the trial of questionable plans, and adopt the theories of visionaries? I hope not, sir; if we should, we might present an example of the case of the man, whose epitaph was in these words: "I was well, would be better, took physic, and here I lie." We have heard in this debate, that the patient is sick, and the brethren insist on being allowed "to do something," if it is "ever so little"—just "something to show they have made progress, even a step." "Progress," that is the word. We do not believe, sir, that the Methodist Episcopal Church is "a sick man;" we cannot consent to have our ecclesiastical Doctors try their hands in giving either Alapathic or Homeopathic doses to this healthy, and athletic giant, nor can we consent that our Sampson shall be shorn of his strength, by having abolition withes bound upon his limbs.

We have had in this country an illustration of the effect of attempting to benefit the colored people, free and slaves, by making non-slaveholding a test of Church membership, in the case of that exemplary people, known as "The Friends"

or Quakers. In 1766, some of them had purchased imported slaves, and despite the efforts of the society, there were some who held slaves, in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, as late as 1776 to 1781. I quote from a publication of theirs made in Philadelphia in 1843, called, "*A brief statement of the testimony of the RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS against Slavery and the slave trade.*" Pages 21, 24, 29, 31, 34, 35.

They had been early in the slave States, as early as 1696, more than fifty years before a single Methodist came to these shores, even before Mr. Wesley was born; but putting themselves upon the ultra platform now sought to be introduced here, they have melted away in the slave States as snow before the midday sun. It will be said, I know, that their want of success has been owing to other causes mainly; unsoundness in doctrine, &c. We have yet to learn that Barckley, Penn, and the "orthodox Friends," are less sound in doctrine than we are, and that they are persons of great excellence of character, all fully admit. But what have they done for either the slaves or free colored population of the United States?

We have heard of "outside pressure," and we are told that "the sentiment of the church is not up to the public sentiment of the country." I doubt not, sir, that there are many in the country who would like to push our Church forward to rash and injurious measures, knowing that they would find their own advantage in placing our Church in a false position. Our course is that of the Apostles and Fathers of our Church, and we cannot come down to meet the demands of the "outside pressure."

If it were possible to pass the measure now before us—you might make a "sectional Church,"—you might chafe and weaken the bonds of the Union, but no good could be achieved for the master or the slave, and no advance step taken for emancipation.

I have been looking into the General Minutes, sir, to see what influence the Conferences have in the free States over the free colored population of the country, and to my surprise I find that in all those Conferences they have less than nine hundred members in the Church, while the Conferences having slave territory, in whole or in part, have an aggregate of twenty-nine thousand colored members, in addition to one hundred and seventy-two thousand colored

members in the church South. Where have all the free colored people strayed to? Have they lost confidence in the "progressive" brethren?

I once heard the Rev. Joseph Cartwright, (a talented and excellent colored preacher,) say that he had always found that those colored congregations that were under the charge of a white elder were better instructed, and more regular and exemplary, than those otherwise provided for.

Our brethren may, possible, have an account to settle in this quarter, which may not be so easy of adjustment.

In conclusion, Mr. President, who asks for this change of Discipline? Who, of our 790,000 church members ask it? Have one in ten, or one in fifty asked for it? How many have petitioned this General Conference? I thought the Committee on Slavery were to report the number, but they have not. Upon examination it will be found that the Conferences whose delegates ask a change, even if they all were to speak, (which they do not, even one in ten,) they are a minority of more than 40,000, as compared with the Conferences whose delegates ask for no change.

The people which he in part represented ask for no change—all they ask is peace and quiet, and to be let alone. They have and love the Discipline, and in the sight and fear of God, they will do the best they can to fulfill, for the bold and free, the great mission of Methodism, "to spread Scriptural holiness all over these lands,"

Mr. Slicer closed, thanking the Conference profoundly for the patience with which they had listened to his remarks.

#### TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

THURSDAY MORNING, May 29.

Bishop Ames presided.

After some discussion—which will be given at the close of the morning debate—the anti-slavery report was resumed.

Dr. Peck addressed the Conference and said :

MR. PRESIDENT—I arise this morning to address this grave body with no little embarrassment. The discussion has been protracted until there is a general desire to bring it to a conclusion. My health has suffered considerably for the past ten days, from the prevailing influenza, and I fear I may find myself physically disqualified to do justice to the occasion. I do not feel at liberty to give a silent vote upon the

measures now before the General Conference. I owe it to myself and to my constituents to explain my position, and to assign my reasons for that position.

I would first remark that I am not here to speak upon the subject of Slavery as an institution. My views upon that subject have long since been settled, and my opinions are before the public. For many years those opinions have undergone no material alteration. But really, sir, I do not see why this Conference should be occupied with so much argument against the institution of Slavery. It has no supporters here—it is not a question before this body. Still the evil has been assailed with logic, invectives, Scripture and declamation. With the present position of the question before the American people we have absolutely nothing to do here. The only question which concerns this grave body of Christian ministers, is, what action, if any, is to protect the Church from serious damage, and to promote the spiritual interests of our own people. I, in part, represent a Conference which lies between the two excited districts. The Wyoming Conference is bounded on the South by the Baltimore and Philadelphia Conferences, and on the North and West by the Oneida and Genesee. Our fears are, sir, that we may be an excited border. We do not wish to have our little Conference visited with a war, which, although it should not consist of another Indian Massacre, would be, if possible, more fearful and destructive.

At present we are at peace among ourselves. A portion of our preachers and people desire a change in our organic law upon the subject of Slavery. The Northern Christian Advocate circulates within our borders to a considerable extent, and many of the readers of that print sympathize with the editor in his views. There is a large class of our most pious and influential members who are opposed to a change—they wish the Discipline to remain as it is. We have brought up no petitions or memorials from our people upon the subject, and there is, so far as I can judge, no reason to anticipate any considerable amount of dissatisfaction within our bounds, if nothing should be done. I know that an influential portion of our people expect me here to use my influence against a change of the Discipline, and should such a change be made, which would disturb the border confer-

ences, those brethren will deeply sympathize with those conferences.

The resolution now before the Conference, which proposes a radical change of our organic law on the subject of Slavery seems, at the present stage of the debate, almost a foregone conclusion, and I would not wish to galvanize it into life. Much of what I intend to say, upon the second resolution of the Report, is now not called for ; a mere glance at the question of the constitutionality of the proposed change is all that is now required,

Two speeches, in particular, which have been delivered since this discussion commenced, have made a strong impression upon my mind. They were delivered by my old friends, Dr. Chamberlayne and Dr. Dempster. Dr. Chamberlayne's scathing invective against American Slavery is beyond all reply. I have nothing to say to the awful onslaught contained in that ingeniously constructed speech ; but the argument with which it closes, upon the constitutionality of the measure in question, deserves attention.

The learned Doctor urges that the General Conference, by a simple majority of votes, has the constitutional right to pass the resolution upon the table. It is objected that the proposed resolution enacts a new term of membership, and consequently is unconstitutional. To this objection Dr. C. replied, that the General Conference, on two important occasions, has changed the terms of membership ; once in requiring baptism as a condition for admission into the church, and again in requiring correctness of faith for the same purpose. To this I reply that there is a want of analogy between the two cases in three particulars.

1. The changes referred to are simple regulations, which existed previously in the common law of the Church.

2. These changes had not been negatived by the Annual Conferences, while the prepared new law on Slavery has been presented to the Annual Conference, and failed. The presentation of this question to the Annual Conferences is a clear concession that the General Conference has not the power to make the proposed change by a simple majority.

3. These changes merely proscribe new regulations for the reception of members ; whereas, the bill now before this house will deprive persons, who are now members, of their

membership, for reasons which existed when they became members.

Here then are three important points in which the analogy of these two cases does not hold, and consequently the argument of my learned friend, based upon a preserved analogy between the two cases, fails to prove his point.

I must now pay my respects to my excellent and learned friend, Dr. Dempster. His argument is so highly metaphysical, as to be somewhat difficult to understand. He has often bewildered men with his metaphysical subtleties. I cannot keep pace with him on that track. I will, however, venture to take an analysis of his argument. The whole force of my friend's conclusions depends upon a definition and a generalization—he defines Slavery and generalizes the proposed law. He says legal slaveholding is one thing, and real slaveholding is another. But what the difference is, and whether the two are separable, seems not so clear. “The legality of slaveholding” does not “mitigate its sinfulness.” Slavery in our Church is “malignant”—not modified by circumstances—as bad in our “private membership” as in a “bishop.” My friend proceeds to prove, or attempt to prove, that the proposed law is unconstitutional because it contains nothing which is not in the existing general rule.

The general rule requires us “to avoid evil of every kind”—this is the *genus*; while one of the specifications, or *species*, under it is the “buying of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them.” The connecting words are “such as.” From these premises the Doctor concludes holding slaves to be prohibited in the general rule, because it is an evil “such as” “buying and selling.” “Now,” says he, “if there be evil of any other form of Slavery, as the general terms recognise every evil of it, it must be included with these two here expressed.” The proposed change not embracing any specification not included in the general rule, it is clearly covered by it, and is neither unconstitutional nor a new term of membership. The whole force of this argument consists in making the words “as such” refer to every evil like “buying and selling men, women, and children,” and not to the catalogue of evils enumerated. He enters a caveat against “confounding the particulars expressed under this general rule, with exhaustive specifications which are intended to express every species which is

contained in the genus." Now, I object to this subtle logic, that we must confine ourselves to the terms and specifications under the rule, and are not left at liberty to embrace the infinite variety of things like them. If my learned friend takes the right views of the philosophy of the general rule, we should not have a catalogue of sixteen specifications—one or two instances of the class would have been sufficient to indicate their character. Now, sir, I put it to the interpreters of the law, whether in the case of a general law, followed by a long catalogue of cases or circumstances, in our application of the law, we are not confined to the particulars given.

Let us now examine some of the more palpable positions of Dr. Dempster. He makes slaveholding analagous to the "corrupt institutions of Pagan Empires," such as idolatry, polygamy, licentiousness, and the like. This classification must dislodge the slaveholder from the Church instant— the slaveholder should not be allowed to remain in the communion of the Church for a single hour. And yet my old friend pleads for an enactment which permits those now in the church who hold slaves, provided they acquire no more, to remain in her communion to the end of their lives! Now, I declare I cannot see how God has ever blessed the Church, if, indeed, as is assumed, in nearly all the speeches on the other side, Slavery, in all its forms, is the gigantic festering evil alledged. The argument, by proving too much, proves nothing at all.

I will make one more remark upon the constitutionality of the new rule. It contains all the elements of the general rule, proposed to be passed by a constitutional vote, and will practically work the separation of all slaveholders from the church. On one or another of its provisions every slaveholder now in the church would be likely to be separated from her communion in a twelve month. It is also clear that the supporters of the law now in question, are under some conviction of its unconstitutionality, or else why do they propose to change the general rule so as to make it constitutional to arraign and expel slaveholders under its provisions. Here I must leave the constitutional objection, which is my first point against the proposed measure.

2. I object to this new rule that it is wholly unnecessary. It is not necessary as a testimony against slavery. The op-

posite side have ransacked the history of our church to prove that it was at the beginning anti-slavery. This they have proved beyond the possibility of a doubt. From the light shed by the past history upon our existing rules, they have proved that they are anti-slavery. According to them, then, our Discipline is an anti-slavery document, and certainly they must not wish it to be more than anti-slavery !

Then, as to the extermination of Slavery, what is needed more than we have, either as to the lawer its administration. It has been fully considered, by the other side, that our brethren in the slaveholding States are doing nobly in the way of meeting the question : " What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of Slavery ? " Indeed, they are doing all that, under the circumstances, it is possible to do. This conviction is cheering to my heart. I had entertained fears that, under the pressure of circumstances, the Baltimore Conference might be ransomed from its long tried position. But it seems now fully conceded that she maintains her ancient honor. The work is going on well under the old regimen, and why must this General Conference be forced into new and doubtful experiments for the sake of facilitating its progress. Overaction is often counteraction. Such will be the fact in this case, I am persuaded.

It is urged that the people of the North demand such a change of our law as will exclude slaveholders. But whence originated this demand ? I would, if possible, avoid giving offence ; but I must say, if I say anything upon the point, that this demand has grown out of the heated controversy which has been maintained for the last six years. Our brethren now seek to meet a demand which they have created. Look, then, at the difference in the two cases. The new rule will be an aggression upon the southern border, while the want of it will just leave our northern brethren where they have always been. It can scarcely be plead that no action will be injustice to the North ; while it is plead, and in truth, too, that action will be ruinous to the work on the southern border. However, the conflicting demands of the North and the South rest upon a widely different foundation, and ought not to be regarded as having equal claims upon this General Conference.

It is urged that the exigencies of progress require this change. True progress, sir, follows the leadings of Provi-

dence. Hasty growth is not substantial. It is one thing to keep peace with God's order, and quite another to force it. What philosophy would there be in leaving the cars, and running in heavy boots to reach a given point, when by sitting still the train would carry you on. We are told that "Slavery is doomed—it will be swept away by the progress of the age." Well, who cares? "Old fogysm will soon be annihilated." And who cares for that? Let the changes which are foreshadowed by passing events come as soon as they may. The time for the annihilation of existing social evils will come, and when that time comes the change will be easy and natural. I am for real and substantial progress—but I am not in favor of the hot-bed, forced development often called progress in these days. Young America lives fast. Once it was estimated that a generation occupied thirty years—now it occupies a much less time. The present race of progressives will soon pass away. There is now a crowd pressing upon them that will soon work them out of their shoes, and stand in them themselves. There is much that is fallacious in this great cry about progress—but there is also much truth in it, which must be encouraged, and which reflects light upon the future destiny of the world.

3. I object to the proposed change that it will destroy the work of God upon the border. Our brethren there have just recovered from the shock occasioned by the secession of '44. Things are now in a happy and prosperous condition; but the proposed new rule will shut us out from the slaveholding States. The status of the Baltimore Conference was endorsed in the General Conference of '44, by New England and the whole North. The leading ministers were highly applauded, and the pledge of honor was, at least impliedly, given, that if she held to her position she would not be interrupted. I was often asked by my Baltimore friends if there was any danger of an aggressive movement from the East and North, which would drive them into separation, or an abandonment of their work; and, in my simplicity, I promptly answered, none whatever. The exigencies of the controversy of 1850, however, on the subject of Slavery, convinced me of my error. I then saw that very danger foreshadowed. I then paid the bitter penalty of refusing to open the columns of the *Advocate and Journal* to the controversy. Many of my old friends withdrew their counten-

ance and support, and assailed me with hard epithets, and bitter reproaches. I was grieved. I loved my old friends, but I loved the Church more. I am here to-day in the same attitude in which I then stood, and for the same reasons.

Mr. President, what are we now about? To us, an experiment in legislation is proposed which will break up the relations between this General Conference and the Conferences in the slaveholding States. And I declare, that I consider this a breach of faith. The Baltimore and Philadelphia Conferences adhered to our Church in 1844 with the reasonable expectation that the Discipline would remain as it then was. In 1848 the General Conference abolished the plan of separation, and took under its care the scattered membership which had been cut off by that plan, in Kentucky, Arkansas, and Missouri. We have created conferences there, and thousands have been converted and gathered into the Church. Now we have before us a project of law which will compel the pastor of those sheep in the wilderness to flee, and leave them to be scattered and destroyed! Sir, I protest against this cruel division of a noble-hearted and confiding people. I, for one, can not consent to it. I will not. I can not thus drive away the pastors of the master and the slave from their God-sanctioned work. I can not and I will not desert them in the hour of their peril. I am with them in weal and in woe, in sunshine and in storm, and they shall see that what I have said for their encouragement and comfort, in the midst of their trials and conflicts, were not empty words. I am by no means prepared to ignore the history of the past, and upon so slight an occasion, to take ground which must either separate from us an interesting and important portion of our work, or so disturb it as to render success utterly hopeless.

4. Again, sir, I object to the proposed change because it will greatly afflict a large and influential portion of the church in the free States. There are multitudes of our most pious and trust worthy people in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and in and about the city of New York, who are uncompromisingly opposed to any new rule on the subject of Slavery. They are in close sympathy with the border. If our brethren there should be disturbed by our action, many of the most wealthy pious, and influential of our members in the localities above referred to will be chafed and disaffected

—to say nothing more. We have intimations of the state of feelings upon this subject in certain influential quarters from the remonstrances which have been sent up to this General Conference against change in Discipline on the subject of Slavery. The opinions of the men to whom I have referred are well considered and are not likely to be easily changed ; and the feelings of such men are not to be trifled with. Should they be permanently disaffected, their influence is lost to the church and the church will lose her power over them.

5. Finally, Mr. President, I object to the whole policy of the report now before the Conference, because it is regarded by its friends as a mere "entering wedge," and not a finality. If a hope might be entertained that the ceaseless agitation on the subject of Slavery would pause somewhere this side of the total ruin of the work in the slaveholding States, there would be some plausibility in a compromise measure ; indeed, almost any change in the law which would not absolutely expel all slaveholders—if its enactment would set the question finally at rest—would be preferable to the irritations of an endless controversy. Our progressive brethren are prepared to take all they can get, but with the frank avowal that they will continue to press on towards the goal of a final separation of all slaveholders from the church. This is what they purpose to accomplish so soon as they can command the votes—they will only pause upon intermediate points, to take breath for a brief period. The present measure, radical as it is, is not a finality ; it is not what our reforms ask for, and intend to have—agitation will go on, and the war upon our southern border will continue to be pressed with increasing vigor, until our brethren there shall either be forced out of the church, or compelled to submit to legal enactments, which are utterly impossible in the slaveholding States.

Mr. President, let not our southern brethren be subjected to perpetual and unmitigated torture ; they prefer to die at once rather than to undergo a lingering death. Away, sir, with those entering wedges ; plant them not in the heart of the tree of Methodism. The sound heart of that old tree is not easily riven. The fibres are strongly interwoven and they will not give away without much resistance and the most agonizing pangs. Now, it seems, the entreing wedge

is to begin its work. The strong men will immediately commence plying the maul, and the work is to go on for the next four years, if it shall not be completed before. Now, sir, the prospect is anything but pleasant—scarcely less to be dreaded than an immediate rupture. Indeed, I think I hear our southern brethren say, rather bring on your powder—plant it in the heart of the gnarled old tree—fire the match and let the work be done at once. Let the bitterness of death pass, and the consequences find the healing remedies of time. New organizations may arise out of the broken fragments, and the evils of schisms may finally be healed.

I do not, by any means, refer to this alternative as desirable, but as the least of two evils, either of which are too fearful for contemplation. I pray brethren to pause. Hold back a little—give over this ceaseless rush upon the most hazardous experiments. The measure now under consideration is a mere antecedent—merely introductory, as the mere preface to the volume. This characteristic of the measure is its condemnation—is what clothes it with its greatest terrors. Let us know the worst, sir, now, without the delay of an hour.

Sir, I am persuaded better things of my northern brothers, although I thus speak. They would not rend the church asunder, nor would they destroy the usefulness of a noble and self-denying class of laborers, with whom they have joined hands to labor for the spiritual good of our people upon the southern border. They would not unnecessarily afflict them. They wish to effect the greatest good by the most direct means. But I doubt not that they are mistaken in their policy. May God give us all light, and save us from subverting the ends which we seek to accomplish.

Mr. President, I close my remarks by frankly saying, that should the measure now before this General Conference come to a vote, I shall vote against it. And when the motion for a change of this general rule shall come up, I shall vote against that likewise. And I shall vote against every irritating measure on the “vexed question” which shall be proposed. After long and careful observation, I have reached the conclusion, that progress in the direction of emancipation depends more upon preaching Christ to both master and slave, than upon any ecclesiastical legislation which the wisdom of this body can devise.

Dr. Raymond said, Mr. President, did I suppose the floor was conceded to me at this time as it has been by a vote of the Conference because of any supposed ability on my part to do adequate justice to the grave subject now under consideration, I should be pressed beyond measure by a sense of the responsibility resting upon me at this hour; but knowing, as I do, that this courtesy

has been extended to me because of the accidental circumstance that I happened to be Chairman of the committee whose report is under discussion, I am relieved from any embarrassment on that account.

Several miscellaneous topics have been introduced into this discussion, concerning which it would give me pleasure personally to speak, and were I to do so, this is doubtless the most appropriate time, but lest I should abuse the privilege conceded me of addressing the Conference when most, if not all of its members are wearied with protracted debate, I defer all miscellaneous matters for the present, and shall not speak of them at all, unless at the close of my remarks I shall judge I may do so without taxing the patience of my brethren.

I come then, without further preliminaries to consider what, as it seems to me, are the main points at issue.

The report before us arranges slaveholders into three distinct classes; first, the mercenary slaveholder—the man who, under civil authority coerces the obedience of his fellow-man for his (the slaveholder's) profit, pleasure or convenience—the man who, for mercenary purposes restrains the personal liberties of another man called his slave. The second class are termed innocent slaveholders—men who sustain the legal relation of master to slave involuntarily. It is a universally recognized principle in ethics, that what is done involuntarily, has no moral character. It may in itself be beneficial or injurious; but in its relation to the agent, it is morally neither good, bad or indifferent. The agent is not by it rendered either blame or praiseworthy. The third class contemplated by the report, is composed of those who voluntarily enter the legal relation for benevolent purposes, as when one purchases a slave to save him from perpetual bondage—from separation from his wife and children and the graves of his fathers; a man who, by the payment of \$500 or \$1000, secures the control of the personal liberties of a slave for his (the slave's) benefit, to save that slave from the terrors of banishment from home and of cruelty under the lash of distant task-masters, perform an act precisely the same in its moral character as if he had paid \$5 or \$10 to purchase clothing for the naked, or any other sum to purchase bread for the starving, is in proportion to the amount of his sacrifice. The report thus contemplates three classes of slaveholders, not three kinds of slaveholding, but three classes of slaveholders, the mercenary, the innocent, and the virtuous. Is this classification exhaustive? If there be any others they are not recognized, they are utterly unknown, and of course are not included in the enumeration.

We now enquire, how does the report on our table regard these different classes of men? We answer, it declares that the mercenary slaveholder is not eligible to membership in the Church of God; it proposes to prevent his entrance, and in case of his presence,

then it proposes to expel him by the proper process of disciplinary trial. Mark well, the sinful slaveholder and none others, not men who are slaveholders and sinners, but men who are sinners because they are slaveholders ; men who sustain the relation of master to slave under circumstances which clearly indicate that their motives are selfish and sinful ; these and none others are to be excluded from the Church.

Persons deemed otherwise worthy, holding slaves involuntarily or voluntarily for merciful purposes are admitted to membership in the Church, their relations as slaveholders are not considered in any way a bar to communion. All the privileges and immunities of "the goodly fellowship of the saints" are fully and cordially conceded to them. Allow me here, to read from the report first declaring that it is with me a matter of almost unmeasured surprise, that during this protracted discussion, the extract I am about to read seems to have been entirely out of view, utterly neglected if not wholly forgotten.

I read the second clause of answer first, in the chapter proposed for insertion in our book of discipline : " Inasmuch as persons may be brought into the legal relation of slaveholders involuntarily, or voluntarily, by purchasing slaves in order to free them ; therefore, the merely legal relation shall not be considered of itself sufficient to exclude a person who may thus sustain it, from the fellowship of the Church." This extract so accurately defines the doctrine of the Report, and so effectually refutes, so absolutely contradicts much that has been said, especially on the constitutionality of the measure proposed for our adoption, that I feel impelled to read it again, and to read it with all the emphasis of which my elocutionary powers are capable.

The speaker here re-read the above extract, after which he said :

Now, Mr. President, and members of the Conference, this admits of no qualification, and can in no sense be equivocal : the "me," and "not me," is an exhaustive category, and each is exclusive of the other, the words everlasting, eternal, and the like, admit of limitation, and may be qualified ; but the word not is absolute and definite. The passage reads, "Shall not be considered sufficient to exclude a person from the fellowship of the Church." The Report, then, does clearly contemplate the reception to membership, and the continuance in membership, of persons holding slaves, either involuntarily or voluntarily for benevolent purposes.

The opposition made to the Report is the next topic to which we invite attention. In the remarks I took occasion to make a few days since, when I moved the adoption of the resolution now before the Conference, and introduced the present discussion, I said there were two classes of consistent opposers to the doctrines of this Report—the first, those who believe Slavery

to be a divine institution—that it is founded in the philosophy of civil society, and is sanctioned by the Bible. I am now happy to know that this class of opponents is not represented in this body of christian ministers. The second, I said, are those who believe that the simple relation cannot subsist under any circumstances without involving the holder in guilt ; in other words that Slavery is such in its nature that a man cannot allow himself to sustain the relation of master to slave without being guilty of the sin of Slavery. So far as I have learned, no member of this Conference now present assumes this second position. One member of our committee, now absent, on account of ill health, (I allude to Dr. Bowen,) said in the committee he could not conscientiously vote for this Report, because he could not allow himself to be understood as sanctioning, in any sense, even the legal relation—with this exception I know not that any member of this Conference entertains this opinion.

We consider it conceded that the doctrines of the document are true, that its measures are in perfect parallelism with its doctrines, that so far as questions of right and justice are involved, the report might be adopted, and that its adoption is opposed solely on grounds of expediency.

Our opponents are of two classes ; the first, those who contend for the Discipline as it is—who will admit no change ; the second, those who desire some change, but oppose the one before us, because of its alleged unconstitutionality.

The position of the first is defined in the Minority Report, now on our table, the substance of which might be embodied in the following resolution :

Resolved, That it is inexpedient for this Conference to legislate on the subject of Slavery.

The issue here is not between this document and another, but between something and nothing ; the inquiry is not whether the doctrines of our report are truthful or erroneous, whether its measures are just or unjust, but whether we shall do something, or do nothing. Were it proposed to substitute for the present chapter on Slavery in our book of Discipline, the stereotyped declaration that “we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of Slavery,” with our Savior’s golden rule appended, our brethren on the border, and those who sympathize with them, would be bound to oppose it for the same reason that they oppose what is now presen-

ted, namely, "we want no change, we go for the Discipline as it is." "The Discipline as it is," "the Discipline as it is," is the beginning and the ending of the homily read to us by the speakers to whom we now refer. Their real objection is not to the character of the thing proposed, but is an objection to any change whatever.

Let us glance for a moment at the basis of this objection. It is this, "our people will not endure it :—" "the public mind in our locality will not allow the agitation of this vexed question." I inquire in what way, in all human probabilities, was we anticipate that this impatience in the public mind will be manifested? What do these brethren fear? Is it persecution by any excited populace? If, so, I cannot appreciate their fears. Is it possible that in this year of grace, 1856, in these United States of America, the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose geographical limits include but a small belt of slave territory—the M. E. Church, sustained by an internal vitality unsurpassed, if equalled in the history of ecclesiastical organizations since the world began, fortified by consideration in the public esteem, commemorate with the wealth of its own inherent merits. The M. E. Church cannot declare that an acknowledged, tried, proved and condemned sinner is ineligible to membership in the church of God through fear of persecution from an excited mob? Is any man that hears me, at the mere dictation of the slave power, prepared to bow so low and to bring down with him in his degrading humiliation the dignity of the church of the living God? Never, no never, cost what it may.—The appeal to our sympathies was well made by the eloquent delegate from Baltimore conference in his speech a few days since. Allow me here to say, by way of episode, how I wished, as I listened to that speech, Bro. Collins might have been permitted to speak on the right side of the question, where the dictates of his judgment, the impulses of his conscience, and the sympathies of his heart, might have had free course, this old capitol would have rocked under the influence of his powerful oratory; but his circumstances compelled him most honestly and conscientiously. I have not the shadow of a doubt, to do what he could to oppose our report, and we were presented with a striking illustration of what a giant can do when bound with chains.

But I was saying the appeal was well made when we were

pathetically asked, "what has Baltimore done that you should multiply her difficulties, that you should increase her embarrassment?" Old Baltimore! my heart says honor to that name, world without end, in the fiercest fight for freedom in the history of our church she stood in the front rank and achieved a victory by the efforts that entitle her to immortal honors, and now instinctively ask myself, is she in circumstances that she dares not declare the truth for fear of the rabbel! No, I know her noble sons will spurn even the suspicion of such a degradation—unanimously they aver we are not afraid of mobs. Well, what then? "Our people, our wealthy, intelligent, and pious people will leave us if this agitation be continued—our churches will dwindle away, and we shall come to naught."

Can this be so? Will intelligent, pious men take offence, and such offence as to desert the church of their choice at a declaration that men tried and convicted of sinful slaveholding ought to be and shall be excluded from the church? if this be so, what state of mind does such a fact indicate? of what opinion or sentiment is it the exponent? does it indicate a correct anti-slavery sentiment? or does it indicate opinions favorable to the institution itself? are such men anti-slavery men, or are they pro-slavery men? I ask these questions. I leave the answer to those who hear me.

We come now, to consider the constitutional objection. It is alleged that this report proposes a new term of membership not included within the general rules—more specifically it is alleged that non-slaveholding is by the report made a condition of membership—that the general rules interpreted by the facts of history do allow slaveholders in the church, and that, therefore, the report proposes to do by a mere majority what the restrictive rules declare shall not be done except by a vote of two-thirds of the General Conference and three-fourths of the members of the several Annual Conferences.

In reply to this, I beg to read again the extract already read twice in the course of these remarks—"the merely legal relation shall not be considered of itself sufficient to exclude a person from the fellowship of the Church."

I also call attention to the fact that every paragraph in this proposed chapter, except the first, contemplates the existence of slaveholders in the Church, even among proba

tioners. I affirm I am utterly unable to understand the meaning of words, if this chapter, either in letter or spirit, in part or in whole, gives the least possible occasion for the objection that it makes absolute non-slaveholding a condition of membership. It excludes sinful slaveholders, and such only. What then is the import of this Constitutional objection? Evidently that wicked men are in the Church by its organic law—by right, and not by sufferance. This assumption we most solemnly deny—we can never be persuaded to admit that the Methodist Episcopal Church ever, either by constitutional or statute law, sanctioned the enormity or mercenary slaveholding and since our report is opposed as unconstitutional, because, as is alleged, it excludes persons having constitutional rights to membership; and since it excludes none but sinful slaveholders, we cannot retire from this Report without acknowledging the horrible doctrine that the vilest of all enormities is sanctioned by the organic law of the Church. But if the time ever was when we could have honorably accepted a substitute to avoid the alleged objection, we can not do it now—since in a speech prepared by one of the ablest pens in our Church, pronounced by one of the most eloquent tongues among us, listened to with the most profound attention, with almost a breathless silence—a silence maintained by the fall of the Chairman's hammar, as oft as it was disturbed by a rustle in the lobby, since in a speech claiming and receiving such high consideration, a speech to be circulated through all our borders East, West, North, and South; powerful in its logic, beautiful in its rhetoric, rich in its historical illustration, elevated in style, and not the least of all, sustained by the authority of its author. With his twenty years of official anti-Slavery antecedents, it has been so unqualifiedly asserted and maintained that the Report proposes what is unconstitutional. Mark it well, Mr. President and brethren, that speech endorsed by the prominence given it in its reception, maintains that our Report is unconstitutional, because it excludes persons having constitutional rights to membership. Now, mark again, our Report excludes none but acknowledged sinful slaveholders. What is the requitur? Can it be anything else than that sinful slaveholders are in the Church by constitutional rights. Ask me, either by a vote or a refusal, to endorse such a doctrine? The rather take instru-

ments of torture and sever that right arm, with a fierce finger, pluck that right eye from its socket, or bathe a murderous dagger in this beating heart. No, no, I would sooner stand alone on the floor of this Conference in defense of the position I now maintain, and thus by my protest leave this an open question for the decisions of future time than yield one moment under circumstances such as now press us to the assumption that the Church, which under God has been the mother of my salvation, was ever guilty of such an enormity as to confer by organic law the right to her immunities upon those guilty of "the vilest sin that ever saw the sun."

The doctrine we oppose admitted, and all that has been said under the promptings of southern enmity, about the injuries inflicted by us upon the Church South is true, all that has been said under the promptings of seceding proselytism among the Wesleyans of the North, about the corruptions and pro-slavery character of our Church are verily yea and amen. Let this General Conference endorse this doctrine, and I venture to prophecy a storm will be thereby raised in public opinion that will lay the temple of our Zion low in irretrievable ruin.

Mr. President, this bill was put on its passage through this house, under the disabilities inconsistent with the processes of impartial legislation—a panic has been excited—a project had been discussed in some of our periodicals of introducing into the chapter on Slavery by a mere majority vote, an absolute prohibition; a measure, which, as I judge, is not only in conflict with our organic law, but wrong in itself, since it would make the door of the Church narrower than the gates of heaven. This, I doubt not, was in part the occasion of the suggestion on this subject, contained in the Episcopal Address—a suggestion of which I do not complain. By reason of these and similar concurrent circumstances, it has come to be a matter of real history, that this persecuted report was pronounced unconstitutional before it was written. Threats of secession and division have been industriously circulated, all, as I believe, without competent authority, yet, not the less effectual for want of authority, which have been sufficiently terrific to frighten even brave men from their self-possession, and to crown the accumulation of unfortunate circumstances, the magnates of the Conference have been opposed to us.

In this connection, I desire to say a few things on the impropriety of trusting to authority on questions of this nature. Had I a question in German Philosophy, you all know to whom I would go for its solution—questions of criticism in English literature would be readily submitted to another, and questions of parliamentary law to still another. On subjects of this character, we gladly sit at the feet of these, our superiors. We rejoice that God has given us such men—men in whose presence we feel an instinctive impulse to hide our little selves in dimness of a very respectful distance; but for myself, when questions of natural rights of God, given immunities are to be determined, I close my eyes on all authority, look within, and as far as possible, independent of all antecedent assumptions and subsequent inferences, consult my own individual intelligence. I rely upon intuitive perceptions, original suggestions, and feel confident, I have here the most perfect, most reliable standard of truth. And if, on questions of this nature, I choose to consult others, I prefer to trust the common sense of common minds, not of the ignorant rabble, but of such minds as compose the mass of the assembly I now address, rather than consult hair-splitting metaphysicians, or extremely profound philosophers. Men should not be swerved from their sense of right, especially when questions of mere expediency are made to stand over against and in opposition to questions of right, even though expediency be urged by vastly superior minds.

I now come to speak of a matter concerning which I did not intend to speak, and I now regret that I feel obliged to allude to it. In the preamble to the report, we find the following language in substance: "It is affirmed and believed that the administrators of Discipline have been conscientiously faithful in doing what they could to extirpate the evil of slavery." Advantage has been taken of this passage to throw contempt upon the report, by representing its authors as inconsistent in conceding that all is right, and yet requiring a change offensive and burdensome to those who are doing the best their circumstances will allow. I feel therefore constrained to say, the reasons given for desiring a change in the Discipline, namely, that the book does not, in express terms, indicate our real sentiments or define our practice as it is, and does not bear such a testimony against the evil as the common sentiment of the Church demands, would have

been complete without the declarations referred to, but it was thought that erroneous opinions were prevalent in the North respecting the anti-slavery character of our churches on the "border," and that such declarations as the report contains were in justice demanded. The passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill (I shall endeavor to refrain from speaking of that bill and its consequences in such language as my instinctive indignation prompts) as is universally known, convulsed the public mind at the North. Unfortunately for us, the first case of its application in the city of New York was by a Baltimore Methodist. Another case in Northern New York occurred soon after, through the agency of a man whose Christian character and respectability as a member of the M. E. Church, was fully endorsed by the editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. The first and most flagrant instance of the execution of that law, occurring in the city of Boston, was reported to be by a Methodist from Western Virginia, and the report was not to my knowledge then contradicted, though, as I here learn, he was a vestryman in another church. Now, by these and similar events, an opinion very unfavorable to even the Christian character of border Methodists, not to say their anti-slavery character, obtained very extensively, evidence appeared in our committee fully authorizing the conviction that these occurrences were no fair exponents of the real state of things among our brethren of the border conferences, and more, that they were afflicted by those events no less than we were; in a word, we were bound to believe what we have stated in our report, and we thought that it was due to truth and justice that we should say as much—hence the paragraphs referred to; and I have only to regret the indiscretion which has rendered this explanation necessary.

Of the Bible argument, on which much learning has been employed in the progress of this debate, I will not tax the attention of the conference to say more than, first, unless it can be shown that sinful slaveholders were intentionally admitted to the apostolic church—a position which I suppose no one will advocate—the discussion has no relevancy to the question of adopting this report, as the report contemplates the exclusion of none others—second, I think it fairly inferable that slaveholders were members of the apostolic churches—precisely such slaveholders as those to whom we open

the doors of our church. If mercenary slaveholders were in the church, they were there for the same reason that they are among us, (as beyond all doubt they are,) namely, that on opening the door for a good man a wicked one has slipped in by his side, and we could not avoid it because we could not search the heart.

Mr. President, for want of time I defer much I would like to say, and without attempting the formality of an easy egress, I conclude abruptly by expressing an intense desire that it may be the pleasure of the Conference to vote directly by yeas and nays on both the resolutions of the report, and with their deliberate decision, whatever it may be, I shall most certainly be content.

Mr. Watson arose, and spoke in substance as follows :

Perseverance has at last prevailed—fortune favors the brave — (Alluding to the numerous unsuccessful attempts to obtain the floor.) Mr. President, I am in favor of the principles contained in the resolution which the pending resolution proposes to lay on the table. I shall not, therefore vote for the pending resolution out of any opposition to the principle of prohibition to slaveholding in the M. E. Church, contained in the majority report.

I am in favor of the earliest practicable moment of inserting in our Discipline a rule that shall prohibit the holding or recognizing the holding of humanity as property by our Church members.

I am for making non-slaveholding a condition of membership in the M. E. Church. I am in favor of the passage of such a law, absolute in its sweep and unequivocal in its wording. I am not, however, for the passing of such a statute in such a manner that will constitute it a nullity. I am for proceeding constitutionally, for in no other way can we act effectively ; and if the laying of the resolution of the report on the table would remove from me the power of acting in favor of the prohibition, I should most certainly be opposed to it. But I regard the laying of that resolution on the table for the purpose of coming to an earlier change of the organic law of the Church, as only changing our tactics, while we battle for the same great truth. Why, I ask, do brethren want to come to a vote, on the change of the general rule? What change do they propose to make? What are they driving at in the future? Why, if they do not act aimless, they design introducing into the Discipline of the M. E. Church a law prohibiting all slaveholding. For my own part, I will not conceal this design. Were I to do so, I should prove recreant to my cause and my constituency. I repeat, that I am an advocate for prohibition now and forever.

My conviction of its necessity have been much strengthened at this General Conference. I am here a learner, and I have certainly

learned something. If the light which has been shed upon my mind be true light, then is the M. E. Church more pro slavery, or rather less anti-slavery, than I have been in the habit of believing. I have always repelled with indignation, during the twelve years of my ministerial life, and the ten years of my editorial life, the imputation that the M. E. Church recognized, in her organic law, the right of a member to hold a human being as property. With reference to this great truth in which I have been wont to glory, I have never deemed it necessary to contend for a change in the Constitution of the Church, in order to make a prohibitory statute in the chapter binding. In this, however, it seems that I was mistaken. Well, I'm sorry. The high authority of Doctors, and the aged and the learned, the beloved and venerable board of Bishops, having all decided against me—having all decided that to change the chapter, without changing the Constitution would be unconstitutional, and the setting up of a new term of membership, in violation of the organic law of the Church, I feel myself compelled by these reasons, were there no others, to step cautiously; in other words to commence at once at the Constitution. And in view of the doctrine that has here been set up in reference to the organic law of the Church, I must say that I am in haste to record my vote upon that subject. My conscience, sir, troubles me upon this subject. True, by this process, the principle of prohibition may be installed in the Discipline, at a much later day than he had hoped. Well, sir, we can well afford to wait, in view of the magnitude of the work. Great reforms must necessarily proceed slowly, in order to operate successfully. A hot-bed growth always argues a sickly life, and a speedy decline. Besides, sir, we are already progressing upon this subject with immense rapidity. Look what has been done, and said, and enacted upon the subject of slaveholding, since the last General Conference. Look what has been done by this General Conference already. Contemplate the moral effects of the discussion of the last five days. I declare to you, sir, that these have been among the most solicitous of my life, they have been among the happiest of my life. No one upon the floor of this General Conference, has been found to stand up here and defend Slavery. The only question between the two parties seems to have been one of right and expediency. All acknowledge that Slavery is wrong, vile, accursed. But all do not acknowledge that it is wrong to admit the slaveholder to the communion of our Church. The brethren holding to this latter view, do not defend slavery, but defend simply their mode of making it, contending that such mode is extirpatory. We cannot agree with them—will not doubt their sincerity—we dare not question them when they say they are opposed to Slavery, but we must call in question their mode of treating it. We believe their medicine is a mere flattering opiate, and not curative. We sympathize with them under their embarrassments. We

live them, and will put our shoulder to their burdens without endorsing their doctrines. We hope that as time advances better counsels will prevail. We hope that they will be prepared, as light upon this great question will spread, to take with us an advanced step upon this subject, without any of those consequences following, of which they are so much in dread.

We are no destructionists, but constructionists. We lean with shuddering horror, over the yawning precipice of a second dismemberment of our ecclesiastical unity. We shall do all we can to prevent it, only let it so be that we shall not sacrifice the truth as the price of compromise. Again, Mr. President, I repeat I have been in the habit of supposing and contending that he who held a slave as property, was a member of our church by forbearance and tolerance, and not by constitutional right. The doctrine set up by this General Conference is, that he is there by constitutional right, and that we cannot deprive him of that right, without changing the organic law of the church. Well, sir, I go for making that change, with a view of taking from the slaveholder this right.—Any details will, of course, be out of order; but I give this as my reason why I wish this resolution to prevail. And now a word in conclusion: I hope it will not be understood that, while I profoundly defer to the judgments and arguments of those brethren who contend that a change of the chapter without changing the constitution would be to act unconstitutionally, yet I cannot so believe, notwithstanding my action in this case.

And now, before I sit down, permit me to thank the Conference for their indulgence, and congratulate them upon the present state of things. This agitation. Sir—these discussions are viewed by me with the brightest hope. They indicate progress on the greatest question of the age. They are not the result of outside pressure; they are the fruits of the church's enlightened conscience: they bubble up, sir, from her inmost heart, a well of a more vigorous life; they may be attended with much to deplore, but this is the price of all reform in this world. An unmixed good, unless it be that of pure grace is nowhere the allotment of man. I view the present struggle but as those pain spasms or epidemic diseases peculiar to and the most liable to attack children of a healthy growth. A healthy child, sir, is none the worse off for having passed the epoch of measles or whooping cough. Nature, too, turns school-master just here. When the eloquence of Omnipotence is heard in the thunder, and its irresistibility is seen in the lightning, and it smites the public down, or dealt out instant death in a private home, or scatters the giant oak into splinters with which an infant may play, accompanying all this is the genial shower, the gentle cloud, stooping down to melt in fatness on the land, while the sunbeams kiss the last wrinkle of wrath from its brow and bend there in blushing beauty, God's own signet ring of assurance and hope.—

The present agitation, sir, though not an unmixed good, is like the storms that purifies the element—we view it as one of the greatest goods.

Let the oak be chewed to atoms by the tooth of fiery fury. Let the stately dome be lit to a blaze by the torch from the cloud—let life itself pay the forfeit, but let truth and purity fall like copious showers over all the earth.

Brother Stevens said : He never corrected a brother while he was speaking ; he approved no such interruptions ; but now, that Doctor Raymond was through, he must remark that he did not say that mercenary Slavery was constitutionally admitted into the Church, but the Church being by its secondary, as well as its constitutional law, anti-slavery still did legally and constitutionally admit simple slaveholding. Who in his senses can deny this historical fact. When a slaveholder presents himself at your altar for admission, you have no right, as your law now stands, to take his slaveholding as (in the language of the report) "*prima facie* evidence of his guilt." He is admissable under your present law, whether constitutional or secondary.

He is either constitutionally or unconstitutionally admitted ; if constitutionally, then the point is conceded ; if unconstitutional, then all the administration of the Church from the beginning—all the administration of Asbury, Coke, and the fathers, relating to Slavery, has been unconstitutional. Does any one dare say this. Slavery has not been sanctioned by our Church at any time, in any way ; but it has been legally and constitutionally tolerated among us. All the declarations of Dr. Raymond on the subject are therefore irrelevant ; they are worse, they misrepresent his opponents. I was a public representative of the abolition cause before that brother deigned to recognize it. I always understood that the reason of our anti-slavery efforts in the Church, was the assumed fact that the Church, though not pro-slavery, still tolerated slavery ; and I never before heard it affirmed by any good Church authority among us, that it was unconstitutionally tolerated. If not, then it is constitutionally tolerated. This is what I contended for, as the implication of the general rule. I have been contending, sir, for anti-slavery action, but for it by the constitutional process. I want not that our anti-slavery action be hereafter disregarded and decried as unconstitutional. I love both the church and the anti-slavery cause too much to expose

either to such a peril. Why will brethren then persist in such misconstructions? Why persist in such doubtful and dangerous measures! Dr. Raymoud is a comparatively young abolitionist. I never knew him very active in the cause till this session. He does not, therefore, know, perhaps, its old grounds. In *Zion's Herald* I always occupied my present position. We must not break up the Constitution, nor break down the Church, for in doing so, we break down ourselves as Abolitionists. This is my old position.—Slavery is in the church—this is the reason why we labor against it in the church. It is in the church, not sanctioned by it, but tolerated by it—by its law, secondary and constitutional. Who can deny it? There has never been one hour of the church's history since its organization under its present constitution, in which simple slaveholding was debarred from its communion. Has the Church been acting unconstitutionally thus through its whole history? If not, then all I have said is true—it has been acting constitutionally. At one time among the frequent variations of its chapter on slavery, is found a rule expressly providing that the preacher shall talk “freely and faithfully” to the slaveholder, on his admission to the church, though not a word is said of emancipation. Was this admission unconstitutional? and yet enacted by the assembled ministry of the Church, with Asbury and Coke at their head? No, no, sir, brethren driven by my humble speech from the unconstitutional basis of their report, can't forgive it, as generous and convinced men should do; they argue not against me, for they can't, but throw themselves on mere verbalisms against me. They cannot succeed in this pettifogging logic. The facts of my speech stand unshaken and unshakable amidst it all, like mighty rocks on the sea-shore, amidst the mere play of the waves of the retreating tide.

Dr. Raymond intimates that after my speech, it became impossible to pass this objectionable part of the report.—Happy, thrice happy shall I be, sir, to find the compliment become a fact, when our session is over. Then shall I, the humblest one among you, have the honor of saving the anti-slavery cause from the irredeemable dishonor of having defeated itself by attempting to force on the Church an unconstitutional measure—which, if even it were not unconstitutional, yet as so considered by our best authorities, ought

never for one moment to be thought of in an exigency so critical as the present—a measure which by its defeat now, can in a short time be constitutionally secured, if desirable and safe. More than this, dearer to my heart, and to all our hearts, I shall have the honor of saving the church from wreck; for if this measure should pass, our unity is gone and our history closed. God be thanked by me, in this agitated hour, if he has put this crown of glory around my unworthy brow! Once before, sir, did a similar exigency providentially devolve upon me. My opponents here seem to intimate that I have retreated from my old ground. Far otherwise is it. When I was called to the Editorship of *Zion's Herald*, it was to rescue the anti-slavery cause and the church from the ruin to which Orange Scott (a man noble, though erring) and his associates was leading it. Louder reproaches than those I hear to-day, were then poured upon me; but God helped me to be firm, and though nearly every Methodist altar in New England trembled and tottered, the church and the anti-slavery cause were saved, and the latter has since stood on a basis of both prudence and effectiveness, which, as your men of the Border have repeatedly said here, has constrained you to respect and honor it; and here I left it four years ago; and here I stand to day, defending its honor and integrity again. Happy, happy am I, in this compliment of my friend from New England—it reconciles my history as an abolitionist—it crowns that history.

[E. H. Pilcher judged it best to fix an hour for taking up the question on adopting the 1st resolution of the anti-slavery report in favor of changing the "General Rule"—that which required a two thirds vote of the General Conference, and the subsequent concurrence of three fourths of the preachers of all the An. Conferences.

He accompanied his motion with remarks deprecatory of the dreadful results that would certainly be reached if the anti-slavery men were compelled to vote on the new chapter first. He intimated that it would certainly be adopted, whatever might follow. And on those who urged this course must the responsibility rest. He was authorized to propose action on the change of the general rule, first, as an olive branch. They might not deem it necessary to act on the second part of the report. He judged it would not be.

Dr. Kenneday with an unusual amount of enthusiasm,

consented for one, to accept the "olive branch," thus tendered. He thought the time had come for the consummation of a closer union of heart and hand of opposing influences which should abide forever. He spoke, he said, "advisedly."

Mr. Wilson of Baltimore opposed taking up the first part of the report, because it related to a change in the organic law which had not been touched by the previous discussion.

Dr. Durbin was ready if the speeches were yielded, to vote and withdraw his opposition previously expressed.

Wm. Cooper wanted to know if by voting on this first part of the report, the agitation would be laid forever? Or would it be called up again! He was indignantly emphatic in his manner, and say, we are ready for a struggle if you say so.

E. H. Pilcher said, I presume Br. Cooper was not in when I made my remarks at the opening.

Cooper, I was sir!

Pilcher, Then I understand him to throw down the gauntlet of defiance. Shall it be so then by those who run that gauntlet? Why do brethren resist a proposal of peace? Are they more anxious for war than harmony and in the church. Are they afraid of a trick? Why wish to increase the discord by postponement? My own convictions and desires breathe a better purpose.

Dr. Durbin, "that is precisely our position." "But," he enquired "if the friends of the new rule fail to get the vote of two thirds in its favor, does that settle it?"

Mr. Pilcher replied that he did not care for any further action. A vote on that question was all he desired.

Mr. Griswold, (of New York east) said he was unwilling to be driven to vote on the new chapter. As he approved of a part of it and disapproved of a part. He could not vote for against it without being placed in a false position.

J. A. Collins disclaimed all purpose of placing a brother in a false position. He can have no objection to voting on the 1st resolution.

P. Coombs disclaimed all suspicion of unfairness or trickery on the part of those who proposed to vote on the 1st resolution.

After some sparring, of little moment, the floor, after a

struggle was to Dr. McClintock, and the Conference adjourned to meet at 2 P. M.]

*Afternoon Session.*—The discussion on slavery was resumed :

Dr. McClintock said—that were he to consult his own feelings he would avoid this discussion altogether. Oppressed by a sense of great personal calamity (the death of his father,) he should not stand here did he not feel that the branch of the church to which he owed so much, was imminently threatened with a great calamity. The time may come, in some future age, when the historian shall give five or six lines to an account like the following. He may tell that, “in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there arose men of godliness, zeal, energy, who went abroad, through length and breadth of every land, proclaiming the Gospel of the Son of God, and everywhere achieving successes beyond all former precedent in the history of religion after the apostolic age. But these men, though they had zeal enough to gather a great church, had not wisdom enough to guide it. May God save our church from ever being the subject of such a record. If there ever was a time when the church had need of the wisdom that cometh from above, that is now. May God grant His wisdom to guide us in speaking and in our writing, at this great crisis of our church history. Mr. President, the spirits of our ministerial commission is given in the words of the Apostle: “We have not received the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”—It is a spirit of courage, not of pusillanimity. We need to be brave men; after godliness, perhaps courage is our greatest need. But our courage is to be tempered and animated by love: not tempered into weakness, or stimulated into rashness. It should always be under the guidance of that wise discretion to which the Apostle gives the name of “a sound mind.” If we need to be brave in order to do right on the southern border, to stand up against the pro-slavery sentiment, we may need it also on our northern border, to stand up against a fanatical abolition sentiment. It is easy enough, anywhere, to go with the crowd; any coward can do that. He found it necessary, as others had done, to define his position. For himself there was no special magic in the phrase, “The discipline as it is.” He did not profess to be a conservative, in the proper and historical sense of that word. When first introduced into English politics, the term was used to designate the tory party—a party that held on to old laws and usages simply because they were old. In this sense conservatism is a fearful evil; it has caused more calamities in human history than all false ambitions. The speaker said that his motto was, “progress with order.” So, with regard to our discipline, he would hold on to it, just as it is, in all its parts, unless something better should be offered; but when the better should appear, he would not stultify himself by holding

on to the worse. When we are convinced that any change is right, and at the same time expedient, we should only be truly conservative in a good sense, by consenting to the change. But to change simply for the sake of change, is as absurd and suicidal as to retain, simply for the sake of retaining. Had he been present to take part in the discussion on the Presiding Elder question, and on the question of the extension of time for the stationing of preachers, he should doubtless have voted with the minority on each.—No, sir, the law of progress is the law of life. But he held at the same time, that true progress consists, not in uprooting good and established foundations, but in building upon them. And in all progressive movements a just and wise expediency must prevail, or the aim at progress becomes destructive. The first rule of true reform, as well as of genuine statesmanship, is summed up in a line of Shakespeare's :

*"Construe the times to their necessities."*

Find out what their necessities are—find out the remedies, and then find out the mode and the time to supply them. It was not wise in young America (and he professed to be a young American) to set aside the wisdom of the fathers as folly. The man or the nation that despises the counsels of age, and makes light of the teachings of experience is on the road to ruin. In this respect we might, perhaps, learn a lesson from the good book, which, as Mr. Dodge had said, is, after all, our constitution. You might find the lesson in 1 Kings, chap. xii :

"And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of King Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) that they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying : Thy father made our yoke grievous : now, therefore, make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed.

"And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people ? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants forever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him.

"So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third

day. And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

"So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents."

He wished also to state that he stood here as an anti-slavery man, in a stronger sense, too, than that on which many men on this floor are anti-slavery. He would speak and act in this place in behalf of the slave and of the church, which, in his heart he believed was doing great good to the slaves. Dr. Thompson had spoken of the three millions of dumb, helpless ones for whom we are acting; let us see to it that we do act for their real interests, and not against them. He should, also, in this great crisis, speak and vote conscientiously; and perhaps he might be allowed a word as to the proper functions of conscience with regard to such a question. He held that conscience should never be summoned to do the work of the intellect: the man who substitutes his conscience for reason and experience, is on the high road to fanaticism; nay, he is a fanatic. And no man is prepared to form a correct moral judgment upon a great and complicated social problem who has not, beforehand, grasped with his intellect all the elements of the problem.—On this question before us, one that had veiled and baffled the minds of philosophers and tortured the hearts of Christians for so long a series of years—is it right to call upon "common sense" to decide? Shall "intuition" cut the knot which intellect cannot solve? No man should be so bold as to pronounce upon the moral guilt or innocence of men involved in the meshes of a great social system, even though it may be plain, even to "common sense," that the social system is wrong in every fibre. And he believed that slavery was not the only system of which this remark was true. The relation of capital to labor was yet an unsettled problem; and he believed he involved many elements of wrong, which time would yet unfold, so that they should be potent even to "common sense." But would it not be temerity indeed, in him, with his own conviction that the present relations of capital to labor are wrongful, to pronounce a sweeping moral condemnation upon the moral condition of all men engaged in trade or manufactures?

These principles, Dr. McClintock thought, might be applied to the practical question which they were now discussing. Shall we send around to the annual conferences a resolution proposing to change the present rule on slavery so that it shall read the "buying, selling and holding a human being as property?" So far as

he was concerned, he should answer that question in the negative: and the reasons for his conclusion were not far to seek. And a sufficient reason, if there were no other, is, that even if this movement were right, it is not expedient. He should have had a few words to say upon the Christian doctrine of expediency, but his friend, Dr. Raymond, had admitted all that could be needed for the argument. In a practical matter, when the question is, what shall be done? this is, and ought to be, the rule of our action. What is inexpedient, with reference to moral ends, can never be right, until, at least, the circumstances change. For many years, the church has been growing up in these United States, and one of its largest and richest fields lies within the Baltimore and Philadelphia Conferences, partly in slaveholding territory. Other conferences have been opened in Western Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, and Arkansas. He would speak particularly of the Baltimore conference, for the simple reason that it was one of the largest that was to be affected by our decision here, and he was pretty well acquainted with its condition. And now what do the delegates from Baltimore tell us will be the results of this proposed measure, if it be consummated? Any benefit to the slave, or any more good to tee master? No, sir, but simply destruction or separation. They tell us—and they are true men—that such a measure will cause them—not indeed to forsake their flock—that they will never do—but to stand apart from their brethren of the north. To make non-slaveholding a term of membership, then, can have only one of these two results—either to uproot Methodism from that region, or to isolate it. Do you wish to bring about either of these issues? Is it expedient? Is it right, in view of the best interests of the slave and of Methodism? Were a proposition brought here affecting the interests of New England in the same way, he should not vote for it, unless it could be shown to his satisfaction, that New England should be sacrificed to the cause of religion and of the church. When the time comes, if come it ever shall, when the church in the slave states is proved to be false to the anti-slavery doctrines of our Discipline, when it can be shown that the true interests of our church, as an anti-slavery church, require that Baltimore should be sacrificed, he would be ready to record his vote for it—but even then, such was his affection for the ministers and people of that conference, that after the blow should be struck he would say, in the language of Mark Antony:

“ My heart lies in the coffin there with Cæsar.”

It may be, sir, said the speaker, that my heart misleads my head, but I do not think so. What is our Church, sir, in the Baltimore conference? She is an anti-slavery church, by our book of Discipline, by all the traditions of the fathers, and by the present conviction of her ministers and her people. She is not ashamed or

afraid to avow the name of anti-slavery ; there it stands, written ineffectually upon her history, so that the world may read it.

There she stands, an anti-slavery Church, and there may she stand forever. Her very existence as such, in a slaveholding region, is a most powerful protest against the system. Her influence tends entirely against the system, not by any interference with political or social questions, as such, on the part of her ministers, but by the silent yet perpetually operative influence of her principles, leavening the society over which her influence extends. The moral grandeur of the position of the conferences in slaveholding States lies precisely here ; if they are not anti-slavery, they should give place to the Methodist Episcopal Church South, which differs from us on this one question, and on no other. But between their position and that of the Church South, there is a great gulf ; who would desire to bridge over that gulf ? Who could do it, with the true interests of the Church or of the slave at heart ? It might be that there had existed in some minds a wish that the border conferences had gone South in 1844, and that the Free States had been left in peace on this question. But one flash of light from the throne above is enough to lay open the deep recess of selfishness from which such a feeling could spring.

He thought, too, that there existed in Northern minds a total misapprehension of the real state of things in the border conferences. Why, sir, in the Baltimore conference alone, the work of the manumission and conversion of the slaves had been going on for more than a half a century, and is going on still, under the influence, not of politics, but of Methodism. And what scroll could contain the names of slaves redeemed from the bondage of sin and now gathered safely in Heaven through the same instrumentality. He did not mean to say that there were no instances of sinful slaveholding, or unchristian treatment of slaves in our church, but the instances were few—in quite as small a proportion as live against the law of God in other portions of the work ; and always, when known, made matter of Discipline. The newspapers trumpet abroad every instance of great wrongdoing, and very properly, too ; the newspapers do not trumpet the multitudinous acts of virtue and benevolence, of which that part of the country is the theatre, and this, too, is proper. Here sits an aged and venerable man, Mr. Griffith, crowned with the glory of fifty years' faithful ministry, who could tell (for he remembers every thing he learns) many a story of voluntary manumission by Methodist slaveholders ; yet, even he could not tell half the tale. What conference in the Free States can present any such record—not a record of resolutions and memorials, but of unequivocal, authentic deeds, involving personal and pecuniary sacrifices, continued through a series of years ?—Shall this work, involving such vast interests for time and eternity, go on, or shall it stop ? No vote of mine, said Dr. McClintock, shall stop it.

Moreover, sir, the people of Pennsylvania and New Jersey are not prepared for such action as this resolution proposes. They are anti-slavery, sir, in their sentiments, but not so far advanced in that line as the people further north. They are becoming more and more so every day ; the sentiment is a growing one there, and everywhere else in the Free States ; and no man need think any efforts of his can stop it. He that expects it to stop until its work is done, is like the foolish rustic in Horace, who stood by the river bank waiting till it should run out that he might cross dry shod:

*Labitur et labitur in omne volubilis ævum.*

But is it the part of wisdom and prudence, so far in advance of public opinion that it will inevitably defeat itself ? One point more, said, the speaker, and I have done. Do not the difficulties that have pressed upon all who have attempted to frame a new law for our Church on Slavery at this Conference, and for the four years past, show that the time for framing it has not come ? A large committee has had the subject in hand for weeks—they have turned the subject over in every shape : yet the law, as they have framed it, hardly satisfies any two men that look at it together.—One member of that committee told me, I think, that he had made fifty trials at it without satisfying himself ? Is not this, of itself, sir, proof that the time has not come ? When the fit time comes, there will be no such difficulty. The terms of the law will readily be found when the time for the law arrives. Law is not made ; it grows ;

After this speech several fugitive remarks were uttered amid the usual bustle before taking the question.

The previous question was ordered by a vote of 146 to 56. The yeas and nays were ordered.

Before the final vote several remarks were made expressive of uneasiness and unwillingness to vote. And some endeavored to give reasons for their vote when their names were called.

Dr. Clarke, editor of the *Ladies' Repository*, protested against being called so suddenly and unpreparedly on the "new rule." He deemed the constitution now anti-slavery. If guilty slaveholders were in the church they were there by stealth. It was with these views that the New York Conference voted against any change. He voted "nay," protesting against the doctrine of Br. Stevens' speech."

F. G. Hibbard did not like the phraseology of the new rule—it would, if carried, produce interminable troubles. He did not believe in the right of property in man. He ed to vote emphatically against the chattel principle,

but hesitated to vote for the new rule. He finally voted "aye."

W. H. Pearne disclaimed all sympathy for Br. Stevens' doctrine that slaveholding was recognized in our organic law.

The vote stood finally :

YEAS.—S. Allen, Me ; N. Allyn, S. Ill ; G. Baker, B. R ; D. K. Bannister, N. E ; H. N. Barnes, N. Ind ; P. S. Bennett, Wis ; L. W. Berry, Iowa ; J. S. Bingham, B. R ; C. Blakesley, Oneida ; G. W. Brower, N. Ind ; E. B. Bradford, Prov. D. W. Bristol, Oneida ; W. H. Brockway, Mich ; J. A. Brouse, S. E. Ind ; A. Brown, Cin ; S. D. Brown, Troy ; D. D. Buck, E. Gen ; D. Burns, Mich ; A. G. Burton, Vt ; G. M. Carpenter, Prov ; J. Chamberlane, Gen ; H. R. Clark, Wyo ; C. S. Coats, E. Gen ; S. W. Coggeshall, Prov ; E. Cook, Wis ; W. Cox, Pitts ; B. F. Crary, Ind ; H. Crews, R. R. ; L. Crowell, N. E ; N. Culver, N. H ; A. J. Dana, Oneida ; J. Dempster, R. R ; J. Dennis, E. Gen ; W. B. Disbrow, N. O ; J. Dodge, E. Gen ; M. Dustin, Cin ; J. Erwin, B. R ; W. F. Evans, N. H ; W. F. Farrington, Me ; J. B. Finley, Cin ; J. Flowers, Erie ; J. Floy, N. Y. East ; J. W. Gowble, Cin ; L. P. French, E. Me ; J. K. Gillett, Mich ; P. D. Gorrie, B. R ; S. Gregg, Erie ; W. Griffin, Troy ; E. E. Griswold, N. Y. East ; L. B. Gurley, N. O ; B. N. Hall, Troy ; R. Haney, R. R ; W. L. Harris, N. O ; G. B. Hawkins, Erie ; U. Heath, Ohio ; J. Henderson, Pittsburg ; F. G. Hibbard, E. Gen ; M. Hill, Erie ; L. Hitchcock, Rock River ; F. C. Holliday, South East Indiana ; W. Hosmer, E. Gen ; W. C. Hoyt, N. Y. E ; D. P. Hubbard, Troy ; P. T. Kenny, Prov ; W. J. Kidder, Vt ; J. E. King, Vt ; H. Kingsley, Erie ; J. C. Kingsley, Gen ; L. L. Knox, E. Me ; J. M. Leiby, Wis ; J. A. Lemon, N. Ind ; A. Lowry, Cin ; T. Marcy, N. Eng ; H. Matteson, B. R ; J. Moffatt, Pitts ; J. Morey, R. R ; G. L. ; Mulfinger, R. R ; Parks, Oni ; S. Park, Troy ; W. H. Pearne, Wyo ; A. J. Phelps, B. R ; E. H. Pilcher, Mich ; H. E. Pilcher, N. O ; C. D. Hillsbury, E. Me ; A. Poe, N. O ; J. Porter, N. Eng ; G. Pratt, E. Me ; D. B. Randall, Me ; M. Raymond, N. E ; W. Reddy, Onei ; J. M. Reed, N. Y. East ; —Requa, Wis ; W. Rice, N. Eng ; R. S. Rust, N. H ; A. Sanderson, Me ; R. Sapp, Mich ; S. D. Simons, Cal ; O. N. Smith, N. H ; H. L. Stark, Troy ; C. Star, Onei ; F. H. Stanton, B. R ; S. R. Thayer, N. E ; J. L. Thompson, N. W. Ind ; E. Thompson, N. O ; J. Thurston, N. H ; R. L. Wait, Gen ; S. Wakefield, Pitts ; S. Washburne, Troy ; J. V. Watson, Mich ; J. Watts, E. Gen ; poonebster, Vt ; Wheeler, N. O ; W. F. Wilson, Erie ; A. J. Witherard, Troy ; E. Youcum, Wis ; W. Young, Cin ; —Hull ; J. M. Stalham, N. W. Ind ; A. Stevens, Prov ; D. A. Wheadon, Onei ; C. S. Burlingham, Gen.—122.

NAYS.—I. N. Baird, Pitts ; H. Bangs, N. Y. East ; J. Barker, Pitts, Battelle, W. Va ; J. G. Beach, N. Y ; A. Bewley, Ark ; J. D. Blain, Cal ; S. B. Blake, Cal ; G. M. Boyd, N. W. Ind ; R. Boyd, Pitts ; C. Brooks, Cin ; J. Brooks, Iowa ; B. F. Brown, Balt ; G. F. Brown, N. J ; H. W. Buck, Ill ; T. Carlton, Gen ; P. Cartwright, Ill ; J. M. Chivington, Miss ; D. W. Clark, N. Y ; J. A. Collins, Balt ; W. H. Collins, Mich ; Z. Con-

nell, O ; S F Conrey, Ky ; P Coombe, Phil ; W Cooper, Phil ; J B Corrington, S Ill ; M D Crawford, N Y ; G R Crooks, Phil ; J Cunningham, Phil ; J Drummond, W Va ; J P Durbin, Phil ; I N Felch, N J ; M Goben, Balt ; W Graham, N W Ind ; B Griffin, N Y ; A Griffith Bald ; W Hamilton, Balt ; J Hill, Ind ; W Hurst, Balt ; F Hodgson, Phil ; J H Hopkins, Mich ; S Howard, O ; J M Jamison, O ; J Kennedy, N Y East ; L H King, N Y ; Calvin Kingsley, Erie ; J Kisling, S E Ind ; P Kuhl, Ill ; J Lanihan Balt ; W F Lauk, Pitts J L Lenhart, N J ; J Lewis, N J ; J Lucock, R R ; J McClintock, N J ; W M Combe, Phil ; G Martin, W Va ; J S Martin, Balt ; J B Merwin, N Y East ; S Y Monroe, N J ; N J B Morgan, Balt ; W Nast Cin ; J Z Nichols, N Y ; A M Osbon, N Y ; T H Pearne, Oregon ; Geo Peck, Wy ; J H Perry, N Y East ; J Poisall, Balt ; J S Porter N J ; J H Power, N O ; T J Quigley, Phil ; H W Reed, Iowa ; A A Reece, Balt ; Price, N Y ; W H Roberts, Oregon ; M Robertson, Ark ; C W Ruter, S E Ind ; G Rutledge Ill ; T B Sargent, Balt ; H Slicer Balt ; W C Smith Ind ; Summer R R ; J S Swain N J ; H S Talbut Ind ; J Van Cleeve S Ill ; S Van Deusen N Y ; G W Walker Cin ; H Wallace Ill ; W A Wilmer, N J ; N Gilson, Balt ; D Worthington, Iowa ; E G Wood, S E Ind ; Jacob Young O ; T J Thompson, Phil ; J M Trimble, O ; A J Triplet, Ky ; W D R Trotter, I L.—94.

To carry the vote so as to bring it under the cognizance of the Annual Conference required 149 votes. It only received 122, which lacked 27 votes of a constitutional majority.

Bishop Waugh announced that the "resolution is not adopted, not having two-thirds of the votes in its favor."

Dr. Raymond moved that the second part of the report be now taken up for action.

Mr. Cooper with great earnestness moved to lay that motion on the table.

Dr. Osbon deemed Dr. Raymond's motion an outrage. It was the understanding that if they consented to vote on the new rule first, the other side would not call up the new chapter.

Dr. Kennedy seemed very much disturbed. He had yielded his opposition to the action on the first part of report, as a peace measure. He did not consult with others, but supposing that he was treating with honorable men he met them with an open hand. Certainly he was assured that the opposite party would not call up this second part, at all, It was to remain on the table, untouched, uncalled by them. This was the pledge.

Who pledged ? who pledged ? said several.

I disclaimed any formal pledge. It was the individual opinion of a worthy brother after consulting as he said with others.

Dr. Raymond. This is all new to me.

Dr. Durbin almost ran up to the platform and vehemently protested and argued the points made by Dr. Kennedy.

A rambling discussion ensued about taking votes by yeas and nays. Dr. Durbin didn't like it. J. H. Collins did Parks of Oneida and Reed of N. Y. East agreed with Collins.

Mr. Hill declared that he had been pressed to vote, by the yeas and nays for what he did not believe right, because it was not safe to do otherwise. Others are in the same fix. We must go in favor of anything that the committee reported.

A general hubbub ensued—Pilcher of O. B. M. Hall—Finley—Hibbard — and others, mingled in the strife of tongues.

C. Kinsley opposed taking the vote now. He was however anxious that something be done for the extirpation of slavery.

Poe seemed to be in the position described by Hill. He was "already chased and crowded contrary to his feelings.

E. W. Coggsell opposed taking up the report. He was willing to have it remain on the table and die there.

Pilcher of Michigan explained his relation to "the peace measure." I proposed taking the question on the 1st resolution first as a peace measure. I was asked if I could pledge that the other part of the report would not be taken up. I could not. My personal opinion was that it would not. If it comes to the test I shall vote for the new chapter.

Dr. Raymond proposed to withdraw the motion to take up but it was remonstrated against by loud cries of no ! no !

J. S. Porter of New Jersey proposed a motion to lay Dr. Raymond's motion on the table as a test vote. Loud cries of "no, no, no," from the opponents of the report—"not a test vote ! not a test vote !"

Dr. Dempster rebuked the winds and the sea, but there was no calm. The excitement was intense. The friends of the report were about to be defeated by a trap prepared by the opponents, and by the treachery of a few called friends. And the opponents of the report did not wish them to see

the trap at their feet. There was a struggle in which unfairness was palpably manifest, but not to the eyes of the victims. Finally, James Porter gained the floor, he said :

Mr. President, I am in favor of the motion to take up. As to any understanding among brethren, that if we would come to a direct vote on the first resolution, the second would not be urged, I know nothing. Knowing that many were anxious to vote on the first, which proposes to change the General Rule, I yesterday moved to make voting on that resolution the order of the day, for 3-1-2 o'clock. I made that motion without consulting any one except the brethren who board with me, and I made it purely with a view of coming to a vote on some part of the Report, and saving time. I did not suppose that brethren wished to discuss it. I was ready to vote upon it, and I thought others were.— But when I saw that members were not ready, and that my object was likely to be defeated, I withdrew the motion—. I made no pledges then in regard to the second resolution, and I have made none since.

I desire now, to take up this resolution. Not with a view to coming to a direct vote upon it, for I am not ready for this. I have not been ready. Brethren have inquired why I did not speak upon the report. My answer is, it has never fully pleased me, from the moment I first heard it read; and I do not wish to come to a direct vote upon it. But if I am pressed to it—if I must vote for this or nothing I shall vote it : and there are fifty upon this floor who sympathize with me in these feelings. This matter has been carried too far, sir, to be dropped here. You let those speeches that have been delivered go out over the length and breadth of the land- and be read by our people, unaccompanied by any anti-slavery expression from this body, and they will produce results we shall not be able to counteract.

I hope the resolution will be taken up. Not to protract the discussion—we have had too much discussion already.— I have a substitute I wish to offer, and one upon which I believe we can harmonize. Let us not get in a hurry, but deliberate on the subject until we hit upon something that will be satisfactory. You know, sir, that I am no revolutionist. I go for the whole church. While I would not increase the burdens of brethren on our Southern border, I cannot be indifferent to the demands of others. We have

difficulties as well as they, and we need protection ; and it is in the power of this Conference to give it. I insist, therefore, that we take up the subject, and without long and desultory speeches, either alter the Discipline, or pass resolutions which shall meet the exigencies of the times.

[Dr. Osborn, highly excited, took the floor. He denounced the course proposed as a trap. To secure the vote already taken, threats had been resorted to. He had been threatened with terrible consequences if that vote was not taken. And now they have taken that vote, they would drive us to the second. During the dinner hour professions of peace were held out to us in the event of a vote being agreed to on the first part of the report. Or, if we would not consent to it the rod of terrorem (!) was held over our heads.

("The rod of terrorem," said Dr Hodgson, in an undertone, "what's that?")

B. M. Hall assured the opponents of the report, that they need not fear the report, for there was not the most distant prospect that a majority of the Conference would go for the report.

Heman Bangs talked at random for a few moments, against the report, all substitutes, all further action. He was ashamed and indignant. He thought their vote on the new rule was to be the end of the agitation.

("So did I," "so did I," and "I.")

He was ready to vote to adjourn to-night. Some one seconded "that motion."

Mr. Bangs then launched out an eloquent jet, in which 'cayenn pepper' "everlasting wrangling about what don't convert a sinner nor save a soul," "rolling thunder," "the Rocky Mountains," and "the Methodist E. Church" were strangely mixed up.

Before closing up, he distinctly informed the Conference of his opposition to this agitation, and that he thought it Methodist preachers would mind their work there would be none of it.

Sanderson, of Me., declared that the understanding was as Dr. Kennedy represented. He would therefore oppose all further action.

R. Boyd was a flattered and disappointed. He voted against a change of the rule, deeming it right now. And he wanted to vote directly on the report which he was in favor of,

Bennet denied that any one had authority to pledge, as had been said. He wanted to vote directly on the question.

Reddy was displeased at the insinuation about tricks and traps. He thought there was no foundation for it.

L. Hitchcock did not desire action on the new rule just because he doubted the constitutionality of the new chapter.

He was, however, willing to postpone a vote on the new chapter. The friends of a change were not agreed. If the question was postponed for four years, they would be prepared to adopt just what was necessary, after having learned the opinion of the church, as expressed by future Annual Conferences.

P. Coombs expressed a defiant feeling, and was understood to dare the friends of the new chapter to try their strength.

L. Hitchcock in somewhat of a similar tone, exclaimed, "Then we will put it through!"

W. Cooper explained. "I am ready for anything now."

Soon after, in the midst of great excitement, the Conference adjourned.]

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

FRIDAY MORNING, May 30.

Soon after the opening of the session, Dr. Floy moved to suspend the order to take up the resolution on slavery.

[He said he felt it a duty pressing upon him. He held in his hand a substitute to come up for consideration hereafter

I have no poetry to quote, nor declamation. My heart's wish is to reach a conclusion of unanimity. I love my brethren everywhere on the border and northern frontier. Difficulties exist in both sections, but brethren must know there is a North. The border difficulty is by some deemed magnified, but not beyond the facts. Our border friends overlook the fact of pressure almost unbearable in other parts of our work. This compels us to do something in answer to the question about extirpation. They ask us to be hushed as death, so that when asked on our return, what did you do? we shall be obliged to answer nothing at all—we talked, talked, talked.

Brethren, we will not be fettered. Would you have us hide our heads in shame, when asked the question, what

have you done for the extirpation of Slavery? Just now there are peculiar signs of necessity that something must be done. The shed blood of our friends is coming up with strong cries from the Territory of Kansas. Horrible outrages are spread upon the pages of our daily newspapers.—What has set fire to Lawrence? Why is that gem of the prairie, that seeks to be consecrated gloriously to freedom, a heap of mouldering ashes?

Who struck down Senator Sumner? (The question of order was stated.) Aye, order is it? The Bishop thought it was not applicable to the question. I am giving reasons for asking the rules suspended. I do but follow others. The reasons in favor of suspending the regular order of the day are, first, that some action is needed—and expected, if we would not disappoint the hopes of our people.

1st. It is needed and expected.

There may be exceptions to this. Let not the brethren forget, however, that beyond the border hundreds of thousands are looking for something to be done here.

2d. Public sentiment everywhere demands it, especially where it is fanned by the aggressions of Slavery. The simple question is on what side is the Methodist Episcopal Church, pro or anti-slavery. (Anti-slavery always.) Thank God for that. All we want is to say so. Put it in black and white, and let it go forth. (It has gone forth.)

(Stevens, in an undertone, requested Dr. Floy to read the substitute he had in his hands. Not hearing exactly the request, or deeming it an admonition to suspend his remarks, Mr. Floy remarked sharply:)

I do not wish to be interrupted. I did not interrupt you in your speech, or during the reading, by Dr. McClintock, of your cogent and forcible recantation, if I may so call it.

After other remarks, Mr. Floy read the substitute he proposed to offer when the report should have been taken up.—It proposed to amend the chapter on slavery by retaining such parts as are found between the quotation marks, and adding what is found in brackets.

1. "We declare we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery," [and hereby declare that the general rule forbids the traffic in slaves, and is opposed to slaveholding for mercenary or selfish purposes.]

2. "When any traveling preacher," &c., the whole being retained as now.

3. [It is the duty of the Annual Conferences and pastors to apply the general rules in conformity with these principles.]

This he offered in all honesty. He hoped thereby to promote harmony. So far as I know all believe the doctrines set forth.

Dr. McClintock demurred at some remarks made by Dr. Floy, which he deemed personally offensive. But they explained, so as to be innoxious.

Mr. Stevens explained his remarks to Dr. Floy as not designed to be an interruption. It was merely a request to have him read the substitute. He regretted the style of Dr. Floy's response to him, yet he would not characterise it as an unhandsome reflection and a taunt. He was unfortunate in being misapprehended. But he was sure that when the brethren had read his printed speech, they would stand corrected in regard to his positions.

He then spoke of his activity in years past as an anti-slavery man—declaring with a ringing emphasis, that "Abel Stevens is not a coward." He besought them for the sake of justice, and as a brother—"Don't represent me as a traitor.

Dr. McClintock asked if his printed speech was the same as that he delivered in all respects.

Mr. Stevens said it was, with two or three phases excepted, which he had altered or omitted, not effecting the argument employed, nor the integrity of the speech.

Mr. Cooper indulged in an explosion, designed to be a speech against time. But at the expiration of 15 minutes, the Bishop declared that the suspension of the rules did not apply to a motion to lay on the table. So he had to quit.—During his utterance there was a legitimate development of bitterness in many exclamations or whispered communications from one to another.

Soon after this they approached the vote.

Bennet inquired if this vote lay the subject on the table indefinitely.

Dr. Kennedy jumped up with uncommon alacrity to answer, exclaiming, "no, no 'no—only for the present."

Several wanted to know if they could give reasons for their vote when called. Would it be in order?

Bishop—Not at all.

The result was, in favor of laying the motion on the table to suspend the order of the day, that the report on slavery might be taken up, there were 123, nay 92.

Those who voted against changing the General Rule so as to forbid slaveholding, voted to lay on the table, except Boyd, of Indiana, and Boyd, of Pittsburgh.

Of those who voted to change the General Rule, the following voted to lay on the table, thus giving the go by to the question of slavery:

Allen of Maine, Allyn of S. Ill., Barry, Brouse, Brown of Troy, Coggeshall, Cox, Crary, Creus, Farrington, Finley, Griffin of Troy, Griswold, Heath, Hill, Holliday, Hoyt, Pilcher of O., Pillsbury, Poe, Pratt, Reid of N. Y. East, Sanderson, Simonds, Starks, Stevens, Washburn, Watson, Wilson, of Erie, Yocum—30 in all.

After this action, sundry minor motions were brought up that elicited little interest.

The report on boundaries was read by W. H. Pearne.

Soon after the Conference adjourned.

#### TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

SATURDAY, May 31.

Conference met at 8 o'clock. Bishop Scott in the chair.

Religious services were conducted by Rev. Mr Lenhart, of New Jersey.

The Journals of yesterday were read and approved.

Mr. Blain moved to suspend the order of the day, and take up the report on Boundaries, which prevailed.

Bishop Baker announced the committee on the last will and testament of Jas. Burdette, viz: Messrs, Griffin, Perry and S. D. Brown.

The items on the Boundaries of the Conferences were read.

The question that the Baltimore Conference be allowed to divide whenever a majority of those present and voting with the concurrence of the presiding Bishop so decide, was taken and carried.

Dr. Durbin moved a reconsideration in order to require a

three-fifths vote in favor of the division, instead of a bare majority.

Mr. Poisal remarked that Dr Durbin did not understand the temper of the Baltimore Conference on this subject.— They will do the fair and honorable thing.

Dr. Durbin's motion was laid on the table, 73 to 66.

Mr. Rannall rose to a "privileged" question. He wished the "privilege" to present to Bro. Noble a present

Mr. Bangs moved that hereafter each speaker be confined to five minutes, except chairmen of committees, which was carried

The report of the Committee on Boundaries was then laid on the table.

Mr. Porter made a report on the expenses of the Delegates, and said there would be a deficiency of some \$3,000, for which drafts should be made, two-thirds on New York and one-third on Cincinnati.

Report was adopted.

Conference adjourned.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Bishop Simpson in the chair.

Religious services conducted by Mr. Parks, of Troy.

After a quorum convened the journal was read and approved.

Mr. Collins called attention to an article in the Cincinnati Gazette, representing him as "the champion of free whisky." In his argument on Tuesday he referred to the temperance cause as collateral proof of his present position. He said, in 1836 it started and went around the conferences—in 1840 it was found it had not secured the requisite constitutional vote—that the effort was renewed, and in 1844, it was still unsuccessful; but that at that General Conference, it was attempted to be passed by a mere majority—that he then raised the constitutional objection; and in 1848 it went in by having obtained the constitutional majority—I do not know the reporter of the Cincinnati Gazette, but submit whether that article does me justice or injustice.—[Cries all over the house, "injustice."] Again, sir, he tells how a colored sister used to hug me [Cries, "you said that," "you said so."] Sir, I was a young man, then, [a voice, "so much the worse,"] and that sister was a very old

woman—[some one said, "you ought not to complain."] I do not complain, sir, of any great injustice in that, but, sir, I never was the advocate of "free whisky," but of constitutional rights. The constitution was respected for twelve years, and the rule in reference to ardent spirits was not changed until its provisions were complied with; I wished the same fidelity to the charter where it was more required. The article presents me as the champion of free whisky. I am not, sir.

Mr. Finley moved to suspend the order of the day to take up the report on Boundaries.

The German Domestic Missions were severally assigned to the proper conferences.

The Missionaries were permitted to meet this year with the Conference with which they had formerly been connected.

A resolution allowing the Vermont and New Hampshire Conferences to unite in one body, should they deem it expedient, was adopted.

The report was then adopted as a whole.

Dr. Durbin moved to take up the report on Missions.

The first item was read.

Dr. Durbin moved that if the Bishops had anything to say on this item, they be requested to speak, which was agreed to.

Bishop Waugh said: The Superintendents had had this subject under consideration, and presented a paper prepared by them, which was read by the President.

Mr. Bangs called for the yeas and nays, which were ordered on the resolution to amend the Discipline, and taken, as follows: Yeas 150, nays 27.

Dr. Durbin moved that the second resolution be taken up on the missionary report. Carried.

Mr. Brockway moved that the resolution be indefinitely postponed. Lost.

Dr. Durbin offered an amendment, viz: to elect by a two-third vote of all the members of the Conference. Adopted.

Dr. Durbin moved also that the election have the concurrence of the Bishop and his colleagues. Adopted.

Mr. Blain moved the previous question, which was sustained.

The question was put, but a quorum not voting, no action was had.

Moved to adjourn. Lost.

A quorum being present on a second count, the resolution was read and amended, and the Conference authorized the Liberia Annual Conference to elect a Bishop for Africa, by a vote of one hundred and twenty-one to twenty-four.

Dr. Durbin moved the postponement of the further consideration of the report of the Committee on Missions. Carried.

Dr. Floy presented a report from the Committee on the Tract cause. Laid on the table to be printed. Also report from the Committee to whom was referred the subject of a cheap commentary. Adopted.

Mr. Reddy moved to extend the time, for the purpose of taking up the report in relation to the Biblical Institute at Chicago.

Dr. Thompson moved the adoption of the first resolution.

Mr. Quigley said that it was too late to act in relation to so important a subject, contemplating as it did, the inauguration of a new thing, unknown to the Discipline.

Mr. Hitchcock did not wish to afflict his brethren, and suggested that the matter be postponed till Monday morning.

Mr. Hibbard did not understand how it was that brethren were not ready to act, and how it was that they were asking for time, time.

Mr. Smith, of Indiana, remarked that the subject was of too great importance to act hastily upon, and he was in favor of postponement.

Pending consideration, Conference adjourned.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

MONDAY, June 2.

Bishop Baker in the chair.

Religious services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Raymond.

The journals of Saturday P. M. were read and approved.

Bishop Baker presented a paper containing the times of holding Conferences.

Dr. Floy, from the Committee, reported No. 3 on the Tract cause, as follows :

The Tract Committee having had under consideration the publication of anti-slavery literature, recommend for adoption the following resolution :

*Resolved*, That the Book Agents and Tract Secretary be and they hereby are instructed to publish in tract or book form such anti-slavery matter as the subject of slavery may demand, including Mr. Wesley's *Thoughts on Slavery*.

Dr. Floy said he was reluctant to detain the Conference at this stage of the proceedings by any lengthy remarks. At the meeting of the Tract Committee, Dr. Peck, acting Secretary of the Tract Society, informed them that three tracts on the original catalogue had been stricken from the list, and three tracts on anti-slavery had been substituted therefor. Dr. Peck, he said, disavowed having authorized the publication of these tracts. Mr. Carlton, the Book Agent, informed the Committee that he knew nothing of the publication, and the Book Agents disclaimed all responsibility in the matter. The Tract Committee also knew nothing about it, and no responsibility, therefore devolved on them.

Dr. F. said we did not like, exactly, to be placed in that position before the world. These tracts had not been placed upon the list in consecutive order, as the tracts displaced by the substitution were Nos. 150, 175, and 183. These tracts had been stricken out to make way for the anti-slavery tracts. The tracts displaced were the tracts on Predestination and Temperance, and one on some other subject.

As much, said Dr. Floy, as we love the anti-slavery cause, we love the cause of truth, and fair and honest dealing more. We found ourselves in this position and were published all over the land as having acted in bad faith, and our brethren, instead of getting the tracts in the list, would find tracts on Slavery. He wanted, for the sake of those good and true men, with whom he was associated in the Executive Committee, in New York, to be set right before the church and the world. We have been branded throughout the length and breadth of the land, and Annual Conferences have adopted resolutions condemning our course. A question arose in the minds of the Committee as to what were their duties and responsibilities. Here were tracts which had been smuggled into our list, and no one can be found to take the responsibility. A motion was made in the Committee to strike off the anti-slavery tracts, and restore the originals. The subject was discussed several hours. These tracts would be scattered throughout the length and breadth of our land, and without any responsibility. It was suggested that another

meeting be held, and that Dr. Stevens, the former Secretary be invited to attend. The day arrived, but it was very stormy. All were present except himself and Dr. Stevens. At that meeting the Corresponding Secretary was authorised to restore the original tracts, and the anti-slavery tracts stricken off. With this action, Dr. F. said he agreed most heartily, and he could not, as an honorable man, do indirectly what he had no right to do directly and above board. We had been published in the papers as bowing down to the slave power by blotting out these tracts on anti-slavery which had gotten there without authority. The resolution he had presented was prepared by the Committee, and concurred in by Dr. Stevens, and was what the occasion demanded.

Dr. Stevens in reply said, that he came in during the latter part of Dr. Floy's remarks, and heard something about "smuggling tracts into the list." As it regarded the tracts themselves, he believed in the policy of putting these anti-slavery tracts on the list. The circumstances of the case and the condition of the country required it. It was well known that the American Tract Society was threatened with ruin on this very account. With him it became a question of the greatest importance, and it was with a view of averting the calamity which threatened the American Tract Society, that he had those tracts published. It was, he thought, certainly proper for us to have Mr. Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery, and in addition to this tract, another had been prepared from Dr. Elliott's work on Slavery.—These are both authentic and authorized documents published by our Book Concern, and thereby endorsed by the General Conference. This substitution was made to meet the wants of the people on our border, and he had no doubt the brethren would agree with him that it was better to have such authorised documents on Slavery than anything else that might be written in the form of tracts. Furthermore, these tracts were classified, and those brethren who did not wish them could leave them out, as they were not under any necessity of purchasing; besides the sale of them will remunerate the Concern and no one is involved. One word, said Dr. S., in regard to the idea of "smuggling." It seemed strange that he should be called upon by such a suggestion to defend his moral character.

Dr. Floy rose and remarked that he did not design to impeach the moral character of Bro. Stevens. The tracts were introduced without authority, and instead of being placed at the end, were thrown into the middle of the list.

Dr. S. resumed. He said there was a printed list of tract books. When he traveled over the country he took this list with him, and he found a long tract of Dr. Bascom's on Temperance, and another on Predestination, and others which had answered well their purpose in other days, but were not specially needed now—these, with scores of others, he erased. *He* had received numerous tracts imported from London—these and the above anti-slavery tracts were substituted and were inserted in the place of those erased, and when the list was filled up, the others were added to the end thereof.—There was another fact to be considered in this connection, and that was that there was a certain time when tract books were put to press, and so of Sunday school books, and those of the general catalogue. These tracts were placed on file for publication long before his successor was appointed.—The time not having arrived for printing tracts they were on hand at the time his successor came into office. He averred that he had no design whatever of delaying their publication until his successor was inaugurated.

Dr. F. said that he had the certificate of the printer.

Well, said Dr. S., the tracts came into the hands of the printer six months after his successor arrived. The idea conveyed was that his object was to throw the responsibility on the hands of his successor. The brethren, he hoped, would, if they thought he had sinned in this matter, forgive him at least, and not impute intentional design of perpetrating a wrong or dishonorable act. *He* had no thought of resigning the office of Secretary when the documents were placed on file for publication, but his full intention was to keep the office. His character was dear to him, and he would go through fire and water to maintain it. *He* appealed to Drs. Peck, Porter, Allen and others, of the Book Committee, in regard to one fact, which is decisive of the question whether these tracts were delayed in order to throw the responsibility upon his successor. It is a fact that he did not expect a successor, that on the day on which his successor was elected, he did not resign the tract office, but resigned the National Magazine in order to retain the tract

office. The letter resigning the Magazine lay on the table of the Book Committee half a day, when they called him in and requested him to withdraw it, and resign the tract cause rather than the Magazine. It is clear then that he had not delayed the publication of tracts, for he did not expect to resign the tract cause down to this General Conference.

Mr. Stevens said he would touch upon another point. It was said he was not present at the meeting of the Executive Committee, and it has also been stated that it was a very stormy day. He was not well, and he did not venture out, besides not one word was said to him previously about the anti-slavery tracts. Dr. Peck said to him that he had no responsibility in the matter, and I replied that I take the responsibility, and you may tell them so. I took the sole responsibility, brethren, and I sent by Dr. Peck a distinct acknowledgment of that avowal. The facts are all before you, brethren, and the motives which prompted my action. I was satisfied that something must be done to save the institution from ruin, and in good faith I acted accordingly.

Dr. Floy remarked that it was very far from his wish to be the antagonist of Bro. Stevens, whom he loved. He would not have introduced this subject if it had not been dragged out of him, and he was thrown upon the defensive. There was no difference between Bro. S. and himself on this subject, except that he claims he did right, without consulting the book agents and executive committee, to publish those tracts, and thereby displace others. Had Dr. Peck stated before the committee that Dr. Stevens had done it upon his own authority it would have been well, or if Dr. P. had only put in writing Dr. S.'s affirmation, that it could have been put upon the record, it would have been well; but this was not done, and the committee, unwilling to take the responsibility, could not dismiss the subject without action. Dr. P. was asked if he authorised Dr. S. to publish the tracts, and he answered in the negative. He said the Book Committee had requested Dr. S. to assist him when he could, and as far as was agreeable. He was asked if Dr. S. had consulted him, and he replied that he had not. Dr. F. said he fully endorsed the action of the committee, and he wanted his abolition brethren and others to understand that he spoke in their behalf, and was in favor of right before expediency.

Dr. Stevens replied that another explanation was neces-

sary. It had been said that the tracts were published without consulting the committee or book agents. He said he knew of no more honorable men than the committee. We never, said the Dr., however, as editors, consult agents or committee in the publication of either Sunday school or other tracts. Not a single tract was ever submitted to them for approval.

Mr. Blake, of the Baltimore Conference, moved to amend by inserting "at their discretion," and "as in their judgment the wants of the Church demand."

Dr. McClintock offered a substitute, the intent of which was that the publication of tracts be left discretionary with the Executive Committee and Corresponding Secretary.

Several amendments and explanations were offered, during which a call was made for the ayes and noes on the motion of Mr. Quigley, for the indefinite postponement of the question. Ayes 53, noes 132.

Mr. Slicer had no objection to the publication of any tracts by a judicious committee—feared the resolution would be considered mandatory—wished the committee to exercise a sound discretion.

Dr. McClintock said he was in no sense opposed to the publication of tracts of a proper character—wished the resolution to express distinctly its meaning.

Dr. Darbin concurred with Dr. McC., that the resolution gave privilege of discretion. Dr. Floy's private opinion was that the committee wished something published on the subject of slavery, and not have it tabooed.

Mr. Disbro did not see the necessity of excitement—thought nothing would be published which would be extreme.

Mr. Dodge was not ready to vote—was a member of the committee, and had a right to be heard—had consented to leave off two, but claimed the third tract ought to be published. There was an important demand for Mr. Wesley's Thoughts. The committee had another word in the report, "the sin of Slavery?"—we took that away to make it soft as silk. The time had come when somebody must speak.

Prof. Harris made some remarks in relation to the resolution.

Mr. Porter, of N. E., said the action of the committee in New York, in striking off three tracts which had been inserted by Dr. Stevens, created an earthquake. Several con-

ferences had threatened, and the object of this resolution was to express the will of General Conference, that something should be published.

Mr. Collins moved an amendment, which did not prevail.

Mr. Trotter was opposed to the motion. He said, though he stood on the Discipline, but did not to take such a stand that we could not progress.

Mr. Cooper thought the subject fully discussed, and moved the previous question. Carried.

Dr. Durbin's amendment was lost—65 to 104.

The original resolution then prevailed.

Dr. McClintock, from the committee on revisals, presented Report No. 5, which was read by items, and adopted with slight amendments.

On motion of Mr. Hitchcock the report of the committee on education in relation to the Garret Biblical Institute was taken up.

Mr. H. read from pamphlets and extracts, from will of Mrs. Garrett, showing a legacy now worth \$100,000. for the establishment of the Institute.

On the 1st resolution some remarks and suggestions were made by Drs. Hodgson, Dempster, Thomas Clark, and Mr. Combe.

The resolution was adopted.

On the 2d resolution, Mr. J. Lewis wished greater guard—Dr. Dempster and Dr. Thomas thought the question was whether this and others should go under our care. Dr. Rice thought they might be useful if properly conducted.

The resolution was adopted.

The 3d, 4th, and 5th resolutions were adopted without discussion.

Mr. Porter suggested an amendment, which was admitted, and the resolution, preamble, and whole report adopted.

Mr. Bangs submitted a programme for election of officers, for which the order of the day was suspended, and his resolution, after discussion, prevailed.

The following resolution was offered by Dr. Durbin, who stated that it was signed by thirty-seven members of the Conference, and the object, as stated, was to avoid co-incidence, in our sessions, with the pending Presidential election every four years :

*Resolved*, That the next session of the General Conference

shall commence on the first day of May, A. D., 1861, and shall be held every four years thereafter, commencing on the first day of May.

Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

On motion of Dr. McClintock, from the Committee on Revisals, Report No. 1 was taken up, and ratio of representation was fixed—not more than one for every twenty-seven, nor less than one for every forty-five.

Adopted—165 in favor.

The other items of the Report and the whole were adopted, and Conference adjourned.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference assembled at the appointed hour.

Bishop Ames in the Chair.

The religious exercises were conducted by Mr. Beach, of N. Y. Conference.

The journals were read and approved.

Mr. Thompson, of Indiana, moved to suspend the order of the day, for the purpose of introducing a resolution in regard to election of Bishops quadrennially, &c. Laid on the table.

Mr. Young of Cincinnati presented a resolution in regard to the publication of the course of study among the German preachers. Adopted.

Mr. Carlton was elected Principal Book Agent of New York Book Concern, by acclamation.

The Conference then proceeded to the election of Assistant Book Agent.

The Chair appointed the following tellers : Messrs Trimble, Rust, Kinsley, and Crews.

Messrs. Griffin, Porter, Hill and Brown, of New Jersey, were put in nomination.

The ballots were cast, and tellers retired.

Mr. Walker moved that the order of the day be suspended. Lost.

The committee on Book Concern reported. Mr. Pearne moved an amendment to strike out "as soon as practicable." The report relates to the establishment of a Book Depository and paper in Oregon, and the report, as amended, was adopted.

Also, in relation to the establishment of a paper in St. Louis.

Dr. Cartwright advocated the propriety of the establishment of such a paper. He would like to move that all restrictions referring to a certain amount of circulation as necessary to be obtained before the paper is adopted by the Conference would be taken off. He thought it would be a strange thing, indeed, if with such a church membership and population as are found in that region of country, the paper cannot be sustained. He hoped the General Conference would not tie them up. They wanted an open field and a fair—he would not say fight, as he had ceased fighting. He had no doubt that the 6,000 subscribers to the *Central Advocate* will be increased to 10,000.

Mr. Poe moved that the restriction be taken off.

Mr. Requa was opposed to the motion. He said the friends of that paper had done all they could to block up the *North Western Christian Advocate*. They will, he said make that paper the organ of that portion who are in favor of continuing the Discipline as it is on the subject of slavery, and opposed to progress.

The tellers reported, but none of the candidates having received a majority of all the votes cast, there was no election.

The ballots were again prepared, and tellers retired.

Mr. Hitchcock was in favor of taking off the restriction, and said he spoke Mr. Watson's sentiments, he being too hoarse to utter them loud enough to be heard by all.

Dr. Cook said some things in reference to the *Central Advocate*.

Mr. Hall, of Troy, was in favor of the amendment, and the largest liberty of speech and the press.

Dr. Berry said it was agreed that the debt should not come up.

The tellers returned, and the vote stood for Assistant Book Agent at New York :

James Porter	114
Benjamin Griffin,	65
M. Hill	18
G. F. Brown,	13

Mr. Porter was declared duly elected.

Mr. L. Swormstedt was elected principal Book Agent at Cincinnati by acclamation.

The subject of the paper was resumed.

Mr. Bennet thought the N. W. Christian Advocate was not opposed to the Central. He was opposed to the amendment.

The amendment was adopted.

The resolution then prevailed, and the whole report was adopted.

For Assistant Book Agent at Cincinnati the vote stood :

Adam Poe,	116
Luke Hitchcock	82
J. A. Brouse,	7

Mr. Poe was declared elected.

The tellers reported for Editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal at New York, the following—

Abel Stevens,	136
F. G. Hibbard,	66
Geo. Peck,	5

Dr. Stevens was declared elected.

Ballots were then cast for Editor of the Western Christian Advocate, at Cincinnati, and the result was as follows—

Calvin Kingsley,	136
Charles Elliott,	73
B. F. Crary,	20
Scattering,	2

Mr. Kingsley was declared elected.

Votes were then cast for Editor of the Quarterly Review at New York, and resulted as follows—

D. D. Whedon,	108
J. McClintock,	99

Dr. Whedon was declared elected.

Votes were cast for Editor of Sunday School Books, and the following was the result—

D. Wise,	123
A. M. Osbon,	61
D. P. Kidder,	17

Dr. Wise was declared elected.

A ballot was had for Editor of the National Magazine and Tracts. Tellers came in and reported as follows—

J. Floy,	125
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J. H. Perry,  
Scattering

79  
4

Dr. Floy was declared elected.

Dr. D. W. Clark having been nominated for Editor of the Ladies Repository and Books at the Western Concern, was elected by acclamation.

Nominations were made and ballot had for Editor of the Northern Christian Advocate, at Auburn. Tellers came in and reported as follows—

F. G. Hibbard,  
W. Hosmer,

118  
94

Dr. Hibbard was declared elected.

Mr. Wakefield nominated Dr. I. N. Baird for Editor of the Pittsburgh Christian Advocate, at Pittsburgh, and he was elected by acclamation.

Nominations were made and ballot was had for Editor of the North Western Christian Advocate. T. M. Eddy and J. V. Watson being nominated, the tellers reported the result—

Mr. Watson was declared elected.

Dr. Wm. Nash being nominated for Editor of the Christian Apologist and German Books, was elected by acclamation.

In the interval of the Election, Dr. Peck, Chairman of the Committee on the Book Concern, presented the following report—

The Committee on the Book Concern have had under consideration the memorial of Rev. W. D. R. Trotter, as also documents from the publishing committee of the Central-Christian Advocate relative to the indebtedness of Bro. Trotter, as editor and publisher of said paper, and asking the General Conference to meet said indebtedness.

The committee recommend the adoption of the following resolution—

*Resolved*, That in order to assist in the liquidation of a debt of seven thousand two hundred and sixty-four dollars and twenty-five cents, resting upon Rev. W. D. R. Trotter, as editor and publisher of the Central Christian Advocate, that the Book Agents at Cincinnati be and are hereby instructed to appropriate for the coming four years all the profits of the paper which we have recommended to be pub-

lished at St. Louis to W. D. R. Trotter, not exceeding the above amount.

GEO. PECK, Chairman.

The resolution was supported by Dr. Peck and Mr. Hosmer.

Dr. Dempster moved an amendment instructing Book Agents to advance one half of the amount, and then to appropriate the profits toward the balance advanced by Dr. Trotter.

Dr. Dempster and Dr. Cartwright advocated the amendment.

Mr. Dennis thought the General Conference had no power from the Book Concern to indemnify one who entered upon a private enterprise.

Mr. Poe stated the opinion of A. N. Riddle, Esq., the Attorney of the Book Concern, was that such appropriation cannot legally be made.

Mr. Carlton stated the restrictive rule was clear, and did not believe we had the authority to make the appropriation.

Mr. Collins read the rule, and thought the amendment no more unconstitutional than many other appropriations—thought there was none in this case.

Mr. Reddy said, "the case being altered, alters the case."

Mr. Porter, of New Jersey was opposed to the amendment and moved to lay it on the table, which was carried.

The resolution was then adopted.

Dr. Trotter, by permission, addressed the Conference.

Dr. Peck, Chairman of the Committee on Book Concern, further reported as follows :

*Resolved*, That the Book Agents at New York be directed to publish a weekly paper, and establish a Book Depository at San Francisco, California.

*Resolved*, That in case a transfer of the Christian Advocate now published there, can be obtained on reasonable terms, they be instructed to adopt that paper as a General Conference paper, provided the cost shall not exceed \$3,500.

GEO. PECK, Chairman.

Dr. Blain moved to amend the first resolution by inserting "and establish a book depository," which was adopted.

Dr. Cook wished to hear from the Book Agents—was opposed to the establishment of the Book Depository, and wished it left with the Book Agents,

Mr. Simonds advocated the resolution—complained of the price of books at San Francisco.

Mr. Carlton, Book Agent, addressed the Conference, presenting statistics and reasons for not adopting the report.

Mr. Simonds thought it a plain case, and was giving facts in relation thereto, when the Conference adjourned.

#### EVENING SESSION.

Conference assembled at 8 o'clock.

Bishop Waugh in the chair.

Mr. Blain moved to take up the report of the committee on the California Advocate. Carried.

The resolution was amended by adding that the Book Agents at New York appropriate \$2,000 annually for the next four years.

The next resolution was laid on the table.

Mr. Blain moved a reconsideration. Carried, and the resolution was amended and adopted.

Mr. Wilson presented reports from the Committee on Itinerancy.

Mr. Hamilton from the committee on Missions reported the amount appropriated to Missions in slaveholding territory, and the amount of collections.

The following information is given the Conference by the Missionary Committee, at the instance of the Conference.

The appropriations of Missionary money to Conferences in slaveholding territory in part or in whole, during the last four years, are as follows—

Kentucky Conference,	\$5,450
Missouri,	17,800
Arkansas,	18,500
Baltimore, Philadelphia and Western Virginia, for four years	40,550

Total appropriations during the last four years, \$64,300

The same Conferences contributed missionary money during the last four years, to the amount of \$163,301 74, showing an excess of contributions of missionary money by those Conferences, over the appropriations of missionary money to them, of about \$100,000.

Dr. Thompson from the Committee on Education reported the following resolution—

*Resolved*, That ministers appointed by our Bishops to Institutions of learning shall not be ineligible to admission into our Annual Conferences if otherwise qualified, and that the Committee on Revisals, be directed to conform the discipline to this principle.

Which was laid on the table.

Mr. Porter of New Jersey, moved a resolution to request the Board of Bishops to inform the Conference if it is expedient to strengthen the Episcopacy. Adopted.

Mr. Young of Cincinnati, moved the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the Book Agents of the Western Book Concern be and are hereby authorised to pay a sum not exceeding \$800 for an assistant editor for the German publications.

*Resolved*, That the Bishops be and are hereby authorised to appoint to this office a German Itinerant Preacher, if such an one is nominated or elected by the Book Committee, or in the absence of the Book Committee, by the Book Agents and Editors of the Western Book Concern.

Which was laid on the table.

Mr. Walker moved that the testimony used in the case of L. D. Harlan be returned to the Secretary of the Cincinnati Conference, which prevailed.

Bishop Waugh gave the answer of the Board of Bishops in regard to the question proposed by Mr. Porter.

Which, on motion of Mr. Bangs, was referred to the Committee on Episcopacy.

Conference adjourned.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

TUESDAY, June 3.

Conference met at the usual hour.

Bishop Morris in the chair.

Mr. Collins moved to suspend the rules for the purpose of introducing a resolution instructing the Book Agents at New York to pay the traveling expenses and salary of Dr. Peck up to the time when he received his appointment in the Wyoming Conference. Carried, and the resolution adopted.

Mr. Hall offered a similar resolution in relation to Mr. Z. Phillips. Carried.

Mr. Hamilton presented the address to the French Conference. Adopted.

Also, the address of the Mission Committee to the Church at large. The reading of the address was prefaced by some pertinent remarks by Dr. Durbin. Adopted and ordered to be printed.

*Moved to suspend the regular order. Lost.*

Dr. Kennedy, chairman of the Committee on the Episcopacy, presented a resolution in relation to the expediency of electing any more Bishops.

Mr. Bangs moved that the question be taken without debate. Call sustained.

The resolution was then adopted.

Dr. Clark moved that the order be suspended for the purpose of presenting the report on Lay Delegation, as follows: The Committee to whom was referred the papers relating to Lay Delegation, beg leave to report;

These papers consist ; First, of a communication signed by sixty-seven laymen in the city of Philadelphia; second, a duplicate of the above, from the same place, signed by fifty-six—making one hundred and twenty-three signatures to both papers ; third a memorial from the city of Buffalo, N. Y., signed by sixty-seven names, including six preachers ; fourth, a communication from Geneva, N. Y., signed by the Presiding Elders of Geneva District, the preacher stationed in Geneva, and sixteen official members of the church in the same place ; fifth, resolutions passed by the Pittsfield quarterly conference in the Troy annual conference ; sixth, resolutions passed by the quarterly conference of New York Mills station, Oneida conference ; seventh, a petition from two members of Christ Church, Pittsburgh : eighth, one from thirty-one members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Ovid, East Genesee Conference, N. Y. ; ninth, one from ten members in the Elyria station, North Ohio conference ; and also, two communications from Edgar Conklin, a member of Union Chapel, Cincinnati.

Your Committee have read all these papers, and carefully considered the suggestions they contain. The first two papers do not purport to be a "petition," but a statement of "sentiments" by respected and honored brethren in relation to Lay Delegation in the General Conference. The third paper corroborates the statements of the above, and asks for the same changes. The fourth papers asks that provisions may be made in the Discipline for a "Lay Delegation"

in the Annual Conferences. The fifth asks the General Conference "to so alter the General Rules as to admit of a Lay Delegation in that body, and also in the Annual Conferences. The sixth requests that the Discipline may be so amended "that the General and Annual Conferences shall be composed of as many lay delegates as clergy. The seventh, eighth and ninth petition, also, for lay delegation in both General and Annual Conferences. The last two communications pray for sundry modifications in our economy, and also for the "General Conference to provide for lay representatives, equal in number to the delegates in the General Conference—the membership in the bounds of each Annual Conference to elect their representatives ; and that the General Conference adjourn for one year, when the lay representatives should unite, at which time the secular matters of the Church shall be acted upon."

Your committee entered upon the matter before them with a sincere desire to ascertain what is the mind of the church upon the subject, and what will contribute most to its efficiency and success. No motives of personal interest, they trust, have influenced them ; nor have they been influenced by any want of consideration for the character and rights of the laity. The assumption that the lay element fails of recognition in our ecclesiastical economy, or that there is any lack of co-operation between the ministry and laity in carrying forward the great work of the church, finds no warrant in our experience as ministers, nor in our history as a church. Yet your committee are free to say that could they see any method by which the element of lay influence could be bro't into a wider and more active sphere, without destroying the harmony of our organization, and thus periling its stability and efficiency, we would most heartily recommend such method for your adoption. We are happy to learn that some of our annual conferences have already, under existing provisions of the Discipline, associated with themselves Lay Stewards, who act as counselors and participate in discussions upon the financial and temporal interests of the church. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to determine the practical workings of this system, nor yet the results to which it will finally lead ; but your committee believe the subject is worthy of the favorable consideration of all our annual conferences.

Again, your committee have not sufficient evidence that the change desired by your memorialists, is demanded by the membership of the church, nor, indeed, by any considerable portion of them, to warrant present action. In fact, they are convinced that though some wise and good men desire the proposed change, the great body of the church do not desire it. The subject has been discussed repeatedly in different periods of our history ; it was largely discussed four years since ; and the attention of our entire membership was called to the subject by circulars, newspapers, discussions, and resolutions passed by conventions. Since then the matter was laid away ; and the general judgment of the church, so far as we have the means of ascertaining it, has settled down in the conviction that such a change in our economy is not desirable, or at least not practicable under existing circumstances.

For these reasons, and many more, which we find it impossible to embody in a brief report, we are brought to the conclusion that the change in our economy desired by your memorialists, is demanded neither by the exigencies of the case, nor by the voice of the church ; and therefore we recommend the passage of the following resolution ;

*Resolved*, That any change in our economy relating to the constitution of our General and Annual Conferences, is inexpedient at the present time.

D. W. CLARK, Chairman.

Carried.

Dr. Clark made some remarks in support of the action of the committee, and stated that they had given the subject a careful and deliberate investigation.

Mr. Watts made an inquiry in relation the petition from the M. E. Church in Rochester, signed by four to one of the male members.

Dr. Clark, in reply, said the report had not come into the hands of the committee.

Dr. Hibbard remarked that the report presumes to judge of the mind of the Church on this subject.

Dr. Clark said the report did not settle the question as a finality. It was still open. The committee could come to no other conclusion than that the Church did not demand the change asked for by the memorialists.

Dr. Hodgson said he thought we might safely conclude

that the change was not demanded at the present time.— There have been no counter memorials. Memorials had been sent around, and efforts made to get up a sentiment, but only 300 names had been obtained. The petitioners were intelligent men, and he thought they did not expect themselves that a change would be effected now.

Mr. Collins moved that the Conference proceed to the election of remaining officers.

The nomination of Dr. Powers, Dr. Elliott, and Mr. Brooks was made for an editor of the Central Advocate. The ballot was cast and tellers retired.

Mr. Pearne was, by acclamation, elected editor of the Pacific Christian Advocate.

Mr. Thomas was elected editor of the California Christian Advocate.

The resolution offered by Mr. Young, of Cincinnati, on yesterday, in relation to an assistant editor of German publications, was taken up and adopted.

The result of the first ballot for editor of the Central Advocate was as follows—

J. H. Power,	26
B. F. Crary,	55
C. Elliot,	28
J. Brooks,	76

And there being no majority there was no election.

The tellers returned, and the result was as follows—

J. Brooks,	114
B. F. Crary,	67

Mr. Bangs moved that when the conference adjourns it adjourn to meet at 2 o'clock. Carried.

Conference adjourned.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Dr. Peck made a report as follows :

The Committee on the Book Concern, to whom was referred the Quadrennial Report of the Publishing Committee of the Pittsburgh Christian Advocate, beg leave to present the following as to its financial condition—

#### ASSETS.

Office furniture,	\$616 50
Due from sundries,	790 21

Bills receivable,	1,735 00	
Cash on hand,	1,792 00	
	<hr/>	\$4,833 71

## LIABILITIES.

Due to sundries,	\$1,225 34	
Bills payable,	1,466 93	
	<hr/>	\$2,692 26

Balance in favor of Advocate, \$2,141 45

There has been a gradual improvement in the financial condition of the paper during the past four years. At the beginning of this Term there was, (besides the amount due subscribers) \$2,300 of actual debt. This has been paid, and we are able, nearly to report ourselves much less in debt to subscribers than formerly.

We therefore report the publication in a safe state.

Signed in behalf of Publishing Committee.

GEO. PECK, Chairman.

Which was adopted and ordered to be published.

Dr. Peck also made a further report, as follows—

The Committee on the Book Concern, to whom was referred certain alleged errors in the Reports of the Book Agents in regard to Quarterly Review National Magazine, and Sunday School Advocate, beg leave to report—

That they have examined the subject in the presence of the Agents and Editors, and after a careful investigation of the items of the the accounts and the manner of making them up they find that these periodicals are charged masters' prices on composition, stereotyping, and press work, and deducting the profits to the Concern on these items, the loss on these publications will be materially reduced. A further reduction of the loss charged will be made if we credit these periodicals with certain assets which belong to them. We also find that the time of making up the accounts prevented these publications from receiving credit for outstanding subscriptions and claims; yet after all fair credits are made, it appears they have not fully met the cost of publication.

This may be accounted for, in part at least, by the great advance in price of paper and labor, after the subscription price had been fixed; and that such an increase in their subscription list as may be reasonably anticipated, and such as

their great merits demand, will carry them safely through coming years. From reliable data, the Committee would furthermore say, that in their judgment, 2700 paying subscribers would fully sustain the Quarterly Review.

In view of these facts, we therefore recommend to the General Conference the continued publication of these periodicals respectively.

Submitted.

GEO. PECK, Chairman.

Dr. McClintock called special attention to the report.—Hoped it would be printed in large letters. The report had gone abroad throughout the community that the Quarterly Review had sunk the Book Concern over \$6,200. He hoped the reporter would note his words. While the report admitted that 2,700 paying subscribers would support it—and it had averaged nearly that number for eight years—he was prepared to show, he thought, that the Quarterly had fairly met all its expenses.

Mr. Stevens wished to say respecting the National Magazine also, that it had not run the Book Concern in debt so much as had been currently reported, and as many believed. He referred to Dr. McClintock, and thought it had very nearly paid its way.

The report was adopted.

Mr. Griffith, from the Committee on the Pastoral Address, presented the same, which was read.

Mr. Collins moved that Dr. J. T. Peck be paid his salary and traveling expenses until 1st of July by the Book Concern. Adopted.

Bishop Baker presented the plan of Episcopal visitation.

Mr. Harris moved that the address on Missions and the Pastoral Address be signed by the Bishops. Adopted.

Dr. Kennedy presented an address to the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Adopted.

Mr. Carlton presented a report in relation to the bequest of Noble Melvyn. Adopted.

Also, in relation to the administration of a Missionary Bishop. Adopted and ordered to be placed on the journal.

Dr. Durbin presented from Messrs. Hoyt and Crawford resolutions of thanks.

Mr. Brockway moved that the Conference proceed to the

election of the Delegates to the different foreign Conferences, and also the members of the Book Committees.

Mr. Brockway moved that the report containing the nominations of the Committee for delegates be reconsidered.—Carried.

Moved to lay the report on the table. Carried.

The following were nominated; Bishop Simpson, Dr. Clark, Dr. Trimble, Dr. Durbin, Dr. McClintock, Dr. Peck, Dr. Collins, Dr. Raymond.

Result of the first ballot of Delegates to the Wesleyan connection—

J. McClintock,	73
Bishop Simpson,	123
M. Raymond,	66
Geo. Peck,	34

Bishop Simpson was declared duly elected a delegate to the British Conference.

Mr. Coombe moved that when Conference adjourns, it adjourn to meet at 8 o'clock.

Mr. Collins presented a communication to the General Conference from L. D. Harlan, asking a copy of the minutes held in his case.

Mr. Harris moved that the request be referred to the Cincinnati Conference. Carried.

Mr. Hitchcock moved that the Agents of the Book Concern at Cincinnati be and are hereby authorised to purchase a lot and build a Publishing House at Chicago when they deem it practicable. Carried.

The tellers reported the result of the second vote—

J. McClintock,	96
M. Raymond,	87

Dr. McClintock declared elected a delegate to the British Conference.

The ballots were then prepared for the election of delegates to Canada.

Conference adjourned.

#### EVENING SESSION.

Bishop Simpson in the chair.

Thanks were tendered to the Superintendents.

Mr. Porter of New Jersey, from the Committee on Expenses, reported a deficiency of \$3,451-10.

Tellers reported the result of the second ballot for the election of delegates to the Canada Conference—

Minor Raymond,	81
Wm. Hamilton,	58
L. W. Berry,	49

And each was declared elected.

Dr. Thompson, from the Committee on Education, presented a report.

Dr. Durbin, from a special committee, to respond to the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of Great Britain, presented their report, which was amended slightly, approved, and adopted.

Dr. Kennedy, from the special committee to prepare a reply to the Congregational Union of England and Wales, reported, which was adopted.

Dr. Kennedy, from the committee to nominate Western Book Committee, reported—John T. Mitchell, Edward Thomas, J. M. Jamison, F. C. Holiday, W. H. Collins, W. C. Smith, P. Cartwright.

The report was adopted.

Dr. Rice, from the committee to nominate the Book Committee at New York, reported the following—

B. Griffen, Isaac Parks, Thomas J. Thompson, Charles B. Tippet, Zebulon Phillips, John McClintock, Richard S. Rust.

The report was adopted.

The report of the committee on Colored Members was, on motion of Mr. Collins, taken up and read, and adopted.

Mr. Bangs moved to fix the place of the next General Conference. Carried.

A rising vote was taken, for Philadelphia, which had 76, Baltimore 27, Buffalo 107, when it was declared that Buffalo having the highest number, and a majority of the whole, was fixed upon as the seat of the next General Conference.

Mr. Swormstedt, Book Agent at Cincinnati, submitted a report for allowance of house rent; and, on motion, it was granted.

Dr. Durbin moved a suspension of the rules requiring changes in the Discipline to lie over one day, which was carried. Dr. Durbin moved a resolution to add to the discipline, "may authorise the election of a Missionary Bishop in the intervals of the General Conference." Adopted.

Dr. Durbin moved to take up the report on the Metropolitan Church. Carried.

The report and resolutions were read, and the 1st, 2d and third resolutions were discussed and adopted.

Dr. McClintock introduced a preamble and resolution, intended as a substitute for the report and resolution of a special committee, reported on the memorial of Rev. Reeder Smith, which was upon the table as follows—

*Whereas*, It has been declared by a special committee to this General Conference that new testimony has been elicited going to show the innocence of Rev. Reeder Smith, therefore—

*Resolved*, By the General Conference, that the Wisconsin Annual Conference be and hereby is authorized and instructed to order a new trial in the case of Reeder Smith in the Appleton Quarterly Conference.

Which was discussed and adopted, under the call for the previous question, by a vote of 104 to 27.

On motion of Mr. Harris, the delegates from Wisconsin were allowed to enter a protest on the Journal.

The report of the Book Committee, concerning salaries and Publishing Committees for the several Christian Advocates, was taken up, read and adopted.

A resolution to allow the salary of Dr. Elliott until the session of his Conference, unless he be previously employed, prevailed.

The Protest of delegates from Wisconsin was read.

Mr. Munroe moved to take up the report on Sunday Schools, which prevailed, and the whole was adopted.

Dr. Nast was appointed on the Publishing Committee of the Tract Society, N. Y.

Bishop Simpson reported a course of study for the German brethren.

Mr. Phelps moved that the Publishing Committee of N. C. Advocate pay the traveling expenses and salary of Mr. Hosmer until the meeting of his conference.

Mr. Allen moved a resolution appreciating the valuable labors of Dr. Kidder, late corresponding Secretary of Sunday School Union, which was adopted.

Dr. McClintock moved to fix the time of holding the next General Conference in September, 1860. A motion to lay the table prevailed—94 to 50.

Mr. Collins moved that the journal be read, and the Conference adjourn sine die.

The journal was read and approved.

Bishop Simpson asked leave to return the hearty thanks of himself and colleagues to the General Conference for their uniform courtesy and kindness during the session, and hoping that the blessings of God might go with them to their homes.

After which, the Doxology was sung, and Bishop Ames pronounced the benediction, Thus closed a most protracted session of the General Conference, in peace and harmony.

#### STANDING COMMITTEES.

It is not necessary to give in detail the names of the Committees. We append the names of Chairman and Secretaries.

EPISCOPACY—J. Kennedy	Cha'man—Elijah H. Pilcher,	Sec.
ITINERANCY—N. Wilson	" Wm. F. Wilson	"
BOUNDARIES—W. H. Pearne	" Thos. Carlton	"
SLAVERY—Miner Raymond	" Danl. Wise	"
BOOK CONCERN—Geo. Peck	" J. M. Trimble	"
MISSIONS—Wm. Hamilton	" W. C. Hoyt	"
EDUCATION—Ed. Thompson		
S. SCHOOLS—S. Vandusen	" J. M. Reid	"
TRACTS—Jas. Floy	" C. N. Smith	"
REVISALS—J. G. McClintock	" W. H. Collins	"

#### SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE ACTION.

Addresses from the British Wesleyans, the Canada Conference, the French Conference, the Irish Conference, and the Congregational Union of England and Wales, were replied to.

Appeals from O. Burgess, J. Demming, E. Delniston, L. D. Harlan, I. N. McAbee, D. J. Snow, J. M. Snow, N. Stokely, were heard and isposed of.

Appeals hereafter to a General Conference, or Annual Conference, may be tried by a committee.

Baptized children are taken under special guardianship.

Bible Society Agents are recognized as in the "regular work."

Bishop's widows and orphans draw their allowance from the Book Concern.

Band societies are not now provided for.

City preachers may be continued more than four years.

Colored churches and preachers may have equal privilege where it is judged expedient.

College appointments are now in the regular work.

Children are to be more cared for by the preachers.

Delegates to Gen. Conf. are to be chosen hereafter, one for every 27 preachers.

Dress must hereafter be conformed to the spirit of the apostolic precept.

Education of the colored youth was commended to public favor.

German books have hereafter \$1000 yearly for four years from the Missionary Society.—The Constitution of the same was altered to suit the provisions of its new charter.

Missionary Bishops are to be appointed, provided there is secured the concurrence of a constitutional majority of the conferences. Liberia Conference may elect one for Africa on the same terms.

Methodism in Ireland is to be helped with men and money.

Tracts against Slavery were ordered published.

Besides these prominent matters, various changes of minor importance were made in the Discipline of the Church. But after examining carefully the published journal, which is edited by the Secretary, I find no more that claims a place in this summing up.

NOTE.—The proceedings herein reported are abridged. Many matters of detail are not given. These are only necessary in the Journal, of the complete minutes. They are to be found in the "Journal" published at 200 Mulberry St., New York.

The debates on Slavery are given in full, as reported in the Daily Christian Advocate, by Dr. Strickland. This report being official was preferred. In no case has any word

of his report of those speeches been omitted. In some cases, additions have been made from my own notes. These, in every instance where the change is important, are distinguished by being enclosed in brackets, or by being leaded, or in larger type.

L. C. MATLACK.

Syracuse, August 1st, 1856.

## APPENDIX.

### THE EDITORSHIP OF THE NORTHERN.

*Discussion at a Convention of the Ministers and Laymen from within the bounds of the Black River, Oneida, Genessee, East Genessee, and Wyoming Conferences of the M. E. Church; held Afternoon and Evening of June 19, 1856.*

REPORTED BY L. C. MATLACK.

At an early period in the sessions of the late General Conference, the purpose to supplant Hosmer was manifestly a foregone conclusion, with the central and southern members of the General Conference. Mr. Hosmer's friends were confident of success however, and laughed at the assumption that the anti-slavery editor, whom the five patronizing conferences were agreed to support, could be supplanted! No such local unanimity existed in reference to the editorship of any other Church paper. And the invariable usage, the common law, that respected and confirmed the local preference was deemed perfectly reliable. Besides, were not a large majority of the Conference delegates anti-slavery men? Surely this fixed the matter! But the election came off—and Mr. Hosmer lacked 24 votes of an election. He was displaced by Rev. F. G. Hibbard.

After the adjournment of the General Conference, it was agreed by the delegates of the Oneida, Black River, Genessee, East Genessee Conferences, to have a convention at Syracuse, May 19th, to consider what it best to do in the emergency. For they deemed the defeat of Mr. Hosmer, a part of the "border" programme, and designed to consummate the work of "crushing out" the abolition agitation in the North. The facts indicating that purpose were to be made known to the public at the Convention.

Being advised of the meeting, and invited to attend, the writer was present.

Dr. Parks was Chairman. The first floor of the large Methodist Church was filled nearly full of men. Most of these, were ministers from within the five different conferences. At least, 200 ministers were present. It was a deeply interesting occasion.

Rev. D. W. Bristol, gave an extended narrative of facts, relative to the movements at the General Conference leading to the elections. He said that the editorship of the great official was considered in a caucus of all those who were in favor of some change in the discipline on Slavery. At that caucus, they nominated F. G. Hibbard.

When the editorship of the several local papers was under consideration, the patronizing conferences in the several localities, were called together severally, and their preferences expressed by nomination. At the meeting of the Conferences patronizing the Northern, Mr. Hosmer received a majority on every balloting—as they voted several times. Finally the nomination was unanimous.

Ten or fourteen days previous to the election. Mr. F. G. Hibbard said to Mr. D. W. Bristol—"I am asked to take the editorship of the Northern Advocate." "Does that request come from one of the patronizing Conferences?" was the response. "No." "Who then does it come from?" "I am not at liberty to call names," replied Mr. Hibbard.

Mr. Bristol then advised him to have nothing to do with such a movement, as it would place him in opposition to the Conferences that would have to sustain him, and bring him in collision with Mr. Hosmer and the friends who were unanimously in favor of his election to that post. Or, if he did anything, Mr. B.. advised him to converse with Mr. Hosmer or at least with his friends.

Mr. Hibbard, in reply to this counsel replied: "I dislike to say anything to Bro. Hosmer about it, and I do not wish to run a tilt with him in this matter. Two days afterward, Mr. Hibbard said to Bristol, "I have written a note to those who spoke to me, declining positively to have anything to do with it." "There," said Mr. B., "the matter rested.

"When the day of election arrived, (Monday, June 2,) Wm. Hosmer was nominated as agreed upon. Dr. Rice, of New York Conference, and others nominated F. G. Hibbard.

When the vote was declared, Mr. Hibbard was announced as elected editor of the Northern Christian Advocate. It was like the cane of Brooks upon the head of Sumner. A chill came over the hearts of brethren: After consultation, two of our most experienced brethren, Israel Chamberlayne, and Jonas Dodge, were appointed to request Mr. Hibbard to resign. He asked until the next day to make up his decision.

("Were they appointed formally, by the delegates of the five conferences?" a voice enquired. Mr. Erwin responded: "They were not. I said that Hibbard was not the man to stand in such a position: and it was not deemed necessary to observe any formality. These brethren acted by common consent." "I sat in the midst of Baltimoreans and Philadelphians when the vote was announced," said another. "We did that thing pretty well, didn't we, said they. While outsiders clapped their hands for joy at the result." Mr. Bristol resumed.)

"Tuesday morning came, and with it Mr. Hibbard's speech. I say it in all kindness, yet I say it. That speech could not have been better adapted, than it was to crush and humiliate his brethren. It was the speech of a shrewd politician. And he did not resign.

"At noon a meeting was held of the delegates of the patronizing conferences. Mr. Hibbard, by request, was present. The members of his own delegation requested him to resign, as they said they could not sustain him nor the Advocate. Mr. Bristol himself declared that he could not, and respect himself. And it was so with many others.

"I told him," said Mr. B., "that in my opinion he had lent himself to our enemies, to crush us. And you are the only man among us who could have been prevailed on to do such a thing."

Mr. B., gave a history of the struggles and losses sustained in getting up the Auburn paper; \$8000 dollars cash had been laid out by its friends, to put in on its feet. Other papers had cost the Book Concern from three to five, and even fifteen thousand dollars. This, not one cent. Now, they had at Auburn, an unencumbered property, lot, building, and press, and type worth from ten to twelve thousand dollars.

"And yet this property, this paper of our own getting up, sustain.

ed by our own special efforts, better than any other paper in this Connection with less expense to the church, is wrested from our hands, controlled in opposition to our wishes, for the purpose of crushing out and defeating our movements. No matter how competent the man they have appointed, nor how much of an abolitionist he is, if he were angel, the principle is the same, and we cannot and will not submit to it. We did not want F. G. Hibbard, and we will not accept him as our editor. The South, the border, the New York conference said to us, "gentlemen you shall have him whether you will or no." And he by consenting to be thrust upon us said, "I will consent to be crammed down your throats whether you would have it so or not." And then when remonstrated with, he (Mr. Hibbard) admonishes us, that if we will go home and quiet the people these will be no trouble!

"Some talk of leaving the Church. They talk of an anti-slavery church, and a pro-slavery church. We are not half as anti-slavery as we ought to be; but we are now head and shoulder above any other church in the land, on the slavery question. I will not leave the church. And Slavery shall not drive me out. I will cling to the Church while one single plank of the old ship remains.

F. G. Hibbard rose to speak, but gave way for.

A. J. Phelps, who made a statement about a speech that Bro. Dennis offered in reply to F. G. Hibbard, in reference to the Northern Advocate editorship, in which he, Mr. Dennis explained the position and views of the delegates. That speech did not appear in the Daily Advocate. On enquiring of the printer, he was informed that the editor had requested him not to set it up.

("What editor?" enquired Mr. Hibbard.)

"Bro. F. G. Hibbard," said Mr. Phelps.

Mr. P. added;—A friend at Auburn informed me that on the Monday following, the adjournment of the General Conference, Mr. Hibbard came on to Auburn, and assumed immediate control of the paper. It was an unprecedented instance of haste—a thing unknown before. He signified to Bro. Hosmer, that if he had any words of good cheer to say through the paper, to say it. But Bro. Hosmer wanted the usual privileges of an ex-editor, to say freely what he thought and felt at parting with his readers. He however could not have the privilege even of a "square" and a half—to state the facts connected with his removal from the editorship. Mr. Hibbard would not put it in.

Rev. F. G. Hibbard now spoke. He was here he said, by accident; and not here as the editor of the Northern Advocate, but as F. G. Hibbard, as a member of the East Genessee Conference.

Of Bro. Dennis' speech, and his course relating thereto, he said: "When I spoke on the subject of my election, I told the reporter not to take down my remarks. I thought it was not a matter appropriate for the public. It was a private, or at most, a local af-

fair, of little general interest. After Bro. Dennais' speech, the reporter came to me saying, "I have his speech written out by himself." Said I, "Do you see Bro. D., tell him what I think about the impropriety of giving that matter publicity. If he insists on having his speech printed, then come to me, and I will write out my remarks. That was the last I saw or heard of the matter."

"As to Bro. Hosmer. I meant to ask him to take charge of the paper a week or two. But I did not see him when we left, and not supposing that he felt himself under any obligation to see to the paper, came on at once, to Auburn. I thought it was my duty to do so. If I was mistaken as to my duty, I may hereafter consent to be instructed by Phelps as to what my duty is!

"I saw Bro. Hosmer at Auburn. After a friendly greeting, (for he is my friend, and we have ever been friends) I said—"If you have a valedictory Bro. Hosmer you wish published, take any space you wish. It is at your service." He said, "I don't suppose you would allow me to publish what I may wish to say about my removal from the editorship."—I replied: "that is not what I meant. I cannot consent to begin my editorial career with a discussion of the legitimacy of my election as editor." To this he rejoined—"I did not suppose you would. And as to a valedictory I have nothing to say."

(Mr. Hosmer rose and said, "my remark was—unless I could embody the reasons explanatory of my position.")

Mr. Hibbard resumed. He said that Dr. Rice, of New York, first talked to him about taking the editorship of the *Northern Advocate*. My reply promptly and repeatedly was, never, never!—Subsequently I took tea in company with a member of the Baltimore delegation. They spoke with me on that subject. My reply was, "I cannot serve."

I began to be a little alarmed. There was now danger of a collision with Bro. Hosmer, or the delegations whose nominee he was. I did not want it to come out, lest I should be suspected of being desirous of supplanting Bro. Hosmer. After considering the matter seriously, I sent to Dr. Rice a note containing my positive refusal to be considered a candidate, and my determination not to consent to be elected to that position.

The next day Dr. Rice asked me what I meant.

"I meant what I said, Doctor."

Said he, "let the matter remain a little while."

My reply was, "what is written is written."

"After this others spoke to me of the same thing. On the day of the election I was writing a letter outside the bar. A motion was made to go into the election for editor of the *Northern Advocate*. I drew out a slip of paper and wrote 'Wm. Hosmer.' Some one nominated F. G. Hibbard. I went within the bar and stated—I am not a candidate for that office. Twice I repeated it. Bro. Matteson repeated it also.

(Prof. Matteson said—"It was not heard distinctly by all. The cry of Hibbard, Hibbard, Hibbard, rung all over the Hall from Baltimore to New York.)

Mr. Hibbard continued, "I will not sit down under the imputation that my declination was not hearty and positive. I spoke loud enough to be heard all over the hall."

(Here Mr. Pearne of the Wyoming Conf. and Mr. Erwin of Black River, said they heard Mr. Hibbard very distinctly, although they were remote from him. Dr. Parks said, it was also said in a loud voice, "We understand it—we understand it.")

After this interruption, Mr. Hibbard remarked—"When the vote was announced, to my utter astonishment I was declared elected. I enquired of myself, what does all this mean? What shall I do? My first thought was, "of course I shall resign." But I determined to think it over. I was waited on by the brethren named. I would not decide then. I wanted to sleep over it once and pray over it more.

"The next morning I saw those brethren. I told them my purpose. I said I cannot resign. I appreciate the peculiar and embarrassing position of things. But I do not see it my duty to resign. I declared to them, that from the moment of my election it was only an affliction to me. From that day to this it has been only an affliction to me.

"At 11 A. M. I rose to a question of privilege. All knew my allusion and I was urged to go on. I then stated the facts I have stated here, and my reasons for not resigning. These I now repeat.

"Church action is a serious matter. However some of my brethren may regard this affair, it was to me a grave matter. The moment I was elected, every thing was changed. I was in a new relation to the church and the General Conference, than that sustained before my election. Now what I did must be done to the church in her official and organized form. Before I had only to deal with individuals as an individual. Now I was an officer of the church and had to deal with the whole church. For my election was a legitimate constitutional General Conference action.

"Some things cannot make me cry. I am not a man of very susceptible feelings. But I have wept over this matter as well as prayed. I never have had such a trial. But I could not and I cannot in conscience do what am requested to. I never desired the office. I resisted it when urged to consent to run for the position. While it was in prospect, and a matter merely of individual preference; I was at liberty to refuse it. But when it was the voice of the church, expressed by the legitimate action of the General Conference I dare not do it. The voice of the church I am bound to obey by my ordination vows. I am ready to die, or to suffer if it must be so in maintenance of my position as an officer of the church. And if it must be so, and we as brethren are to disagree,

and be separated until we meet in heaven ; if I am to be suspected and opposed so let it be. But there is no need to have any such state of things existing among us here. There is no just cause for the apprehension of evil that brethren entertain and express so freely.

"I told the New York and Baltimore brethren that they did not know me, and "I shall not please you," said I to those brethren. When I spoke in Conference I said if any man has voted for me from any misapprehension of my position let him rise in his place and change his vote. Or if the General Conference desire to alter their action I am willing to have the vote reconsidered. But nothing was said or done.

"I could not resign without giving a reason, and what reason was there to give. Here I am, such as I am. I cannot be accountable for the motives or remarks of any who voted for me. If my views of personal dignity and self-respect had agreed with the views of some of my brethren, I should have declined the nomination given me for another post. I was nominated to the editorship of *The Christian Advocate and Journal* of New York city by Conferences not interested in its support.

(a voice—the patronizing Conferences were represented.)

Aye, yes, I believe Reed of New York East was there.

A. J. Phelps said, "Troy, and New York East were represented, and on my motion, as they represented patronizing Conferences, the delegates from those two bodies were allowed to nominate.—And they nominated F. G. Hibbard."

This remark was followed by clapping and laughter. Mr. Hibbard was displeased at this, and said, "I will retire if I am not to be treated gentlemanly.

Mr. Hibbard said farther. "Brethren, will you allow a word more. It is a mere abstraction you are pursuing. I am not under pledge to pursue a specified course. I am a free man. I am more of an anti-slavery man than you think I am. And the border brethren so understand it. The Baltimore men came to me and begged and plead with me before our action on slavery. They cried over it. They said "Hibbard don't kill us"—don't divide us."—My reply was—I shall stand by the anti-slavery principle in any event.

"Brethren I am not pledged to slavery ; nor even to wink at that abomination. My vote in favor of changing the General Rule tells my position.

"I am no fool. I don't think I am a fool. And since God converted my soul I have tried to be an honest man. I shall never quit the Methodist church while God spares my life and common sense.

"I said to Brother Hosmer what shall we gain by a storm. It will do no good. Why should we injure ourselves. If any body

has wronged us why increase the injury. It is as foolish as the conduct of a passionate child that falls on the floor and bumps its head on the floor.

"A word now about what my good Bro. Bristol said. He was willing to defer to the majority of the brethren here. If they will agree to sustain the Northern he will defer his feelings to their judgment and unite with them. So I said. I deferred my judgment to the expressions of my brethren in accepting this office.

D. W. Bristol said: The fact is now established by Bro. Hibbard's own statement, that, he was in negotiation with the Baltimoreans and New Yorkers about the editorship. He corresponded with them. They have imposed him on us, and oppressed us. It is a question of liberty.

F. G. Hibbard remarked. If they alone had elected me it might be just to so charge. But they did not and could not elect me.

D. W. Bristol [to Hibbard.] Will you please tell us if these brethren had not voted for you could you have been elected.

F. G. Hibbard. I do not suppose I could have been, but they did not give me 118 votes. The votes of the abolitionists elected me and I will serve them faithfully.

Watts now spoke. He admitted that Bro. Hibbard was conscientious, but he argued that conscience was not an infalible guide. A man might be very conscientious and be very wrong. As to the imposition of an editor upon us by these border men it is an invasion of state rights. It is claimed I know that the church did it. It was the church! Who is the church? The Oneida Conference is part of the church. The East Genessee Conference is the church! The Genessee Conference is the church! And so also of Wyoming and Black River. It takes something else to make the church besides New York and Baltimore, and the rest of them who go cotton and slavery,—and every thing else they ought not.

"But Baltimore comes in tears! Yes, Baltimore can cry easy! They wanted Bro. Hibbard to save the Church. I don't wonder he yielded. I will not characterize the action of another; but I could not have consented to take such a position and maintained my self respect. But tears are powerful as well as eloquent. Brother Bristol's tears, however, for there were tears in his eyes doubtless, when he plead for peace among the Northern Churches were not so powerful. The Southern plea prevailed. Both called. The Northern call was only a common calling. The effectual call was from the South! But before I would have served at such a post I would rather dig in the canal for six shillings a day. Nothing sir, nothing would have induced me to play the part, or do the work of a dagger in striking down the Northern Advocate and its editor. No, sir. No sir. All cottondom could not do it. All slavedom could not bribe me to help carry out the purpose to put down Hosmer.

"For that is the work to be done. That's the work sir. Long before the General Conference, the word had gone forth, that, Hosmer must be put down. That word came from New York—Hosmer must be destroyed! The back bone of the abolition cause must be broken or bended. Why sir, when even our good brother Watson was shaking in the wind at Chicago, when some of us feared that even he would tack round and go South; a breeze, a gale from the old Northern struck her, and the Northwestern righted up all square and fair to the wind again.

"But we have no organ now. They have wrested it from our hands. Other men came over the border and seized it. We must ignore that paper. Its editor whom the South imposed on us, claims to be anti-slavery. He has never been accused of that where he is best known, in his own conference.

"This thing is a good deal like the Kansas outrage! Only the border ruffians of Kansas, did really come over and camp out on the territory. But, they who invaded our rights, never so much as lighted a camp fire on our soil!

Dr. Parks, "We'll crush out your radicalism" was the declaration of those who did this thing, after it was done.

F. G. Hibbard, "will Brother Watts put his finger on the chapter and verse of the Constitution and Discipline, specifying any such state or local rights? The fact is, there are no such rights."

Watts replied that the constitution of rights was in part unwritten law, like the constitution of Great Britain. Usage, invariable usage, self-evident propriety, common sense, good faith, all were invaded. And these entered into the constitution of things as much as the words of the book of Discipline,

Squiers moved a mock sympathetic resolve, on behalf of the delegates to the General Conference who had been whipped out in the election for editor.

A. J. Phelps retorted sharply. It was not an expression of sympathy, but a declaration of resistance to oppression that was required.

Prof. Matteson stated that more than one year ago different persons had been ploughed with, to get their consent to run for the editorship of the Northern against Hosmer. At our last Conference, it was proposed that we express by resolution our desire for Mr. Hosmer's re-appointment. I opposed this as I desired to be free to make such an arrangement as the five conferences might choose to make at the General Conference. My position on this matter was supposed to indicate a disaffection toward Brother Hosmer. Two dignitaries of the church spoke with me in guarded words. Said they—"keep out of all cliques from now until the next General Conference." What does it mean, thought I. In a little while it was explained. Soon after one of our superintendants took me aside in New York and counselled with me about the

editorship of the *Northern Advocate*! Why was this? I had preached in New York two years. It is understood that however a man may come into the city, he will not long remain before he will become covered from head to foot with cotton. And I had been preaching to the cotton men, to slaveholders and others in old John St., so long that I was deemed a safe man!

"A week after General Conference had commenced, Henry Slicer, generously noticed me for the first time. As I passed him he winked at me and beckoned with his finger. When aside, he asked me "would you like to be editor of the *Northern*?" And added, "you can be if you wish to." My reply was "No sir." If I wanted that position I might have it on the nomination of my own Conference.

This proposal of editorships from the South. These tea parties. These crocodile tears, sir, that are so common, and so easily poured out, they mean something. They mean the purchase of men to betray the North.

F. G. Hibbard—"No sir." Mattison—"Yes sir."

Hibbard—"No sir," I shed no crocodile tears.

Mattison—Baltimore tears I mean—not yours.

Hibbard—I attended no tea party. I only dropped in to tea.

Mattison continued:

"The action of the Conference after all was not an overwhelming expression of the Church. There were 118 votes for Hibbard and 94 for Hosmer. It needed only a change of 13 votes to effect a very different result.

"In this case our Southern brethren tried one man who said "no." Then another who said "nay" yet, in such a manner that they somehow or other were encouraged to repeat the appeal until it succeeded. It is a good deal like the refusal of some girls to be kissed who after all don't make much fuss about it.

"This act, sir, is an invasion of our dearest rights. We have now come to the test. It is with us the three cent tax on tea. Submit to it, and we have no guarantee for the future.

(I. Hunt—"We never had any such rights.")

One of their leading men, said Mr. Mattison, told me in view of this change of editor in the *Northern* that now the abolition agitation would die out in the next four years. The discussion will not go on as it has. You can not get the three-fourths vote, and the next General Conference will not entertain the question as we have here. He exulted over this hope and to did others. They understand it sir.

"Now sir, my brethren have thought me to be rather low toned in my anti-slavery—(A voice "That's so.") Well, I have deemed it best, to make not the highest professions, and try to live fully up to what I did profess. But low toned as I may be deemed in my anti-slavery, I have been, and I feel now, outraged in my feelings. The patronizing conferences are outraged—principle is outraged.

And I should be ashamed of myself as a Methodist preacher, if I bowed down to this oppression tamely.

"In determining our action we should not give a feather's weight to the value of the property we shall lose by relinquishing the *Northern*. Let them have it—lot, buildings, presses—every thing ! Let them go, sir ! And let us have a press which shall be eternally free ; into which the General Conference shall not put an editor world without end !

Dr. Bowen made a personal explanation of words spoken to Dr. Rice, who had represented him as desiring the removal of Mr. Hosmer and the election of Mr. Hibbard, which was not correct. He then characterised the election of Hibbard as an imposition of the Southern Conferences. It was in perfect keeping with the slave power. Yet, he was not so clear that Br. Hibbard's decision, after he was elected in opposition to his remonstrances, was not right.

"I do not," said he, "agree with Bro. Watts' remarks about the Church. This act is the act of the Church after all. I don't like the trick by which it was consummated, but after all I like Brother Hibbard.

"In my opinion, our Northern delegates did wrong in nominating an editor for the *New York Advocate and Journal*. It was an oversight. I advised against it. I foresaw they would take advantage of it, by claiming the right to nominate for us ; and the reaction comes upon us.

"But I insist that Northern votes elected that man ! (pointing to Hibbard.) He was elected by northern votes, I say. For the northern men have not proved true to the interests committed to their care. We had two distinguished men from New England on whom I relied to give tone to the anti-slavery action of the Conference. But they deserted us. I then saw that all was gone. I gave up all for lost. Some of the Northwestern men were dough-faces, and they foiled us. The fact is, our Northern men have not back-bone. They have no bond of union, no well arranged and well understood platform of action. If it were not for their connection with slavery and its influence upon them, I should much rather be identified with our Baltimore brethren than with the North, in any movement. They are united. They act as one man. And they succeed.

"We have been overreached. We always are. I feel mortified and ashamed to think of it. Dr. Raymond did me the honor of making my position that of Athanasius against the world. He represented me as the only man on the Conference floor who held that in no case was slaveholding justifiable, but that it was always sinful. ("He said on the committee, I think, Doctor," remarked Dr. Parks.) No, sir, he said, "there was but one member on the Conference floor," and added that "he is now absent." And no man disputed the assertion of Dr. Raymond. Not a brother from the

North claimed to hold with me to that sentiment. They had the opportunity, but did not do it. If they agreed with me, why did they not say so. But not one of them spoke.

"I now give up the anti-slavery movement as lost. It is at the head of the government. Ecclesiastically it is at the head of the Church. And as to our Church my last hope died out with the last General Conference. I have no hope. Our movements have have been retrograde for the last four years. Four years ago the slaveholders, or their apologists, dare not look us in the face, at Boston. They would hardly venture to admit that they were slaveholders. Everything was done by management. But at Indianapolis they met us in the open field and whipped us out in a fair fight. The Northern Conferences are conquered territory. And this was done in an open field fight.

"I hate to be always beaten. But it is always so. The South can have just as many go over every time they need men, as will carry the point. No measure fails for want of men. And here we are. The General Conference has tied our hands.

"If the report on Slavery had been adopted, we should have been worse off than we are now. That new chapter would have been worse than the old one in the Discipline. For the new chapter did, formally, sanction and recognise the relation of master and slave.

"The shadow has gone back ten degrees on the dial. And yet I expected it. I told Brother Hosmer long before the General Conference, that he would be removed from the *Northern Advocate* by northern votes. I saw them a ruling at the North. There were signs of failure.

"I don't like the movement now contemplated. It is too late.— If the whole North had stood up in a line we should have triumphed. Eight years ago, after a long struggle, we elected an anti-slavery man editor of the *New York Christian Advocate and Journal*.— Then there was hope. But he deserted us. And our opponents, whom we were anxious to defeat, obtained the control of our official press, by the desertion of our leader. And now we are handed over again to our opponents by the desertion of those in whom we trusted,

"This Southern influence is a witching power. I hardly dare trust myself with it, with all the stamina and self-will I have! We elect anti slavery men as editors and book agents. But where are they? This influence swallows them up. They are gone. We are every one of us slaves. The Southern influence has, or now supposes it has, every facility secured for crushing out the anti-slavery cause.

"Yet I think Br. Hibbard an anti-slavery man. His speeches, I think, show him to be more anti-slavery than the report of that committee. I believe he will be a good editor. If he should lend himself to the South I shall be disappointed. I want to wait.

"A new paper will be revolutionary. It will promote secession. The South will rejoice more over that than anything they have done themselves. It is just what they want us to do.

"I hope the brethren will consent to waive this matter for the present, and co-operate with Br. Hibbard.

Dr. Park said: The five conferences patronising the *Advocate* were up to the mark, except four men. Four men voted against Hosmer. One from Black River, one from E. Genesee, two from Wyoming. The Troy delegation and others, voted against him under misapprehension. He would not impeach the ability, or piety, or anti-slavery character of Br. Hibbard, although he regretted his election. Nor would he despair of ultimate success. We shall yet rally, said he.

Two different papers were presented, expressive of the feelings of the convention. But both were unacceptable, and the last was laid on the table by a vote of 94 to 64.

Wm. Hosmer now spoke. He thought they were driven out, and perhaps as portoinless as Adam and Eve out of Paradise. But he felt at liberty to be as much of an anti-slavery man as he pleased. He was just as ready to be caned as anything else. He did not agree with Dr. Bowen, if slavery had got into the government, and the Episcopacy, and the papers. We are bigger than the government, and that is not saying much. We are bigger than the Episcopacy, thank God—bigger than the papers.

He was in favor of action, renewed, vigorous, fearless action.—He would not have them embarrassed by that most contemptible of all bug-bears, "unconstitutionality." Their action should be influenced by considerations higher than, and beyond the present.—Action that would commend itself to the ages to come.

He had no plan, however—had no project of a paper, nor anything else. Yet, if that was deemed best, he should not be scared at all that was said about the mischief of having a free paper. He was afraid that a blow had been struck that would weaken and scatter them.

He would not patronise literature that Baltimore has under her gracious control. He thought that they needed a paper that was free from the control of the General Conference. He would not consent to lie down under the insult put upon them. But what form of action to adopt he did not know. Perhaps Conference resolutions, perhaps a new paper. There are principles to be defended. This may be the occasion of different measures and of disagreement. The South have no principles, no conscience. They can get along easy. They have only to follow the lead appointed and acknowledged. Brute instinct only was necessary for their harmony in action.

"God deliver me from secession," said Mr. Hosmer, "I'll stay in the Church until the Devil leaves it." He begged them not to be discouraged.

As to the anti-slavery report, he was ashamed of it. But it was that or nothing. He was now sorry they tried to unite the discordant elements. It was a failure. The Bishops had forestalled their action, and thereby discouraged their men. But there was progress, he thought. The anti-slavery cause had a hearing. It was the first time in fifty years. That discussion makes them tremble down South. True, they have spiked our northern cannon. But we can get another, or unspike that. The Church was more anti-slavery now than ever before. Since the fathers fell asleep all things remained as they were until within a few years past.

Revolution he thought was the last bitter pill to be taken. He believed it would never be necessary. Perhaps, after all, Mr. Hibbard may be the very man for us. He told the story of the old woman who had bread brought by wicked boys, though in answer to prayer, as she thought. The Lord sent it if the Devil brought it. It might be so with the new editor!

He had been ashamed of his moderate course on slavery, and meant to strive to do better. He was now praying to be more an i-slavery.

It was moved to appoint a committee to report a series of resolutions for the evening meeting; and they adjourned to meet again after preaching.

*Evening Session*—The services of public worship continued until 9 : 40. The convention was then re-organized—Dr. Parks in the chair.

The committee on resolutions presented the following :

*Whereas*, It has hitherto been the conceded right of the delegates from the patronizing conferences of the several local papers, to nominate their editors; and the usage of the General Conference has always been to elect editors so nominated by acclamation, without the formality of balloting; and

*Whereas*, At the late General Conference the Rev. William Hosmer was nominated by the representatives of the five patronizing Conferences of the Northern Christian Advocate, as their only candidate for the office; and

*Whereas*, The delegates from the New York and Baltimore Conferences, and others opposed to the anti-slavery sentiments of the Northern entered into a concerted scheme to defeat the wishes of the delegates from the patronizing conferences of that paper, and in utter disregard of all former usage, and of the wishes and rights of the above named northern delegates, forced upon us an editor of their own choice, whose services we had not desired. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Convention the heretofore conceded rights of the five patronizing conferences of the Northern Christian Advocate have been so stricken down as to give us no assurances for the future that the paper which we have established and so successfully sustained, shall be left to reflect our sentiments, or supply our wants.

*Resolved*, That while we declare our firm and unyielding attachments to the doctrines and institutions of the M. E. Church, we cannot consent to such an encroachment, without uttering our most solemn protest.

*Resolved*, That it is our decided conviction that the peace of the Church and the future prosperity of the cause of God in our midst, call for the immediate resignation of Rev. F. G. Hibbard, as editor of the Northern Christian Advocate.

*Resolved*, That in expressing the above sentiments we cast no reflections upon the character or ability of the present editor of the Advocate, whom as a brother and fellow laborer in the ministry we highly respect and esteem.

*Resolved*, That in case Bro. Hibbard should refuse to resign his present office, we are in favor of the establishment of an unofficial and independent Methodist paper, upon a basis similar to that of Zion's Herald of Boston.

H. MATTISON,	} Committee.
J. WATTS,	
L. D. DAVIS,	
E. B. TENNY,	

The first resolution was read. W. H. Pearne of Wyoming Conference, said he could not vote for it. The chief difficulty in his way was, that it assumes what is not true in declaring that the Northern Advocate was not or could not be a proper medium of communication for the patronizing conferences. He did not believe it.

"Except in two or three instances there was no understanding among those who voted for a new editor, that the anti-slavery character of the Northern would be at all changed. When he asked King of the New York Conference if he meant any thing like that he said "no!" With this knowledge I cannot vote for the resolution.

"And then again I believe in my heart that Brother Hibbard is an anti-slavery man. This resolution by implication, will be an impeachment of his integrity."

Mr. P. deemed it necessary to pause. They were drifting upon dangerous times. Brethren will do well to consider their ways.

Bro. Tenny corrected Mr. P. He said the resolution only declares that we have "no assurance" for the future ; that the Northern would serve their purposes. It did not affirm directly, nor did it mean what Mr. P. supposed. He would not question the veracity of Bro. Hibbard. Yet there are many who call themselves anti-slavery men whom we would not choose to have the control of our northern movements. John A. Collins and Henry Slicer each say "I am an anti-slavery man."

— Williams spoke in defense of Mr. Hibbard's antislavery character. He contested the doctrine that his election was in violation of "conceded right." The constitution knows no such rights. He thought the church literature had never been so anti-slavery as now. They had removed Dr. Elliott—and even Dr. McClintock, each had to go.

"The resolution in itself is harmless, but its associates are mischievous. They are revolutionary. They will scatter fire brands, arrows, and ecclesiastical death. We shall if we adopt them gratify the South by dividing the anti-slavery brethren.

As to inducing Mr. Hibbard to resign it was out of the question. "You know," said he, the iron will of the man—the stuff he is made of. He will not resign. Mr. Williams feared that they were on the verge of a precipice—at the mouth of the volcano.

—Ives said he cared very little whether the resolutions passed or not. The primary object was, that the facts might be got before the brethren. This had been done now. He repeated that the object of this movement by the border men, and New York city men, was to crush out the anti-slavery cause. But then we must "pause," says one. You must "hold on," says another. And it has been the same cry for years and years. "Hold on ! Hold on." No matter how grievous the wrong inflicted, nor how disastrous the course pursued by the pro-slavery men, you must hold on. "Just hold on now." No matter how many societies are to be broken up or destroyed. You must hold on. You must submit. You must not do any thing. The enemies of freedom may take what measures they please, to instil their

poison throughout the connection, but we must do nothing to prevent it. We must hold on !

He proceeded to elaborate the matter and declared that the evils to be feared were not on one side only of this question. If we do not adopt some vigorous measures to resist and repel the invasion of northern rights and northern feelings, there will be an unprecedented revolution in our societies. They esteem the Northern Advocate dead. And so it is for every practical purpose. In ten days there will not be 10 subscribers left of the present list in Auburn, unless we do something here to redeem it from the thralldom under which it is placed. (A voice near by said—And so too of Jordan.) The only thing that will save our church from ruin will be prompt action here. The people look to us as anti-slavery men for something decisive. And we mean to do something.

L. D. Davis said he was the author of the resolutions under consideration. He designed to avoid any impeachment of Bro. Hibbard. Indeed the election of Bro. Hibbard was a gratifying fact to him when first known, before he learned the means and motives leading to the choice.

As to the "strife of churches" brethren feared if we passed these resolutions, he would say—it has begun already. The revolution dreaded by some has commenced. The injury to the church has been inflicted by the Gen. Conference at Indianapolis.

But then no harm will come of it if we will yield. True, if we will all go South and do as the South say, we shall all be one. But is this the price of unity in the Methodist Episcopal Church? Must we indeed give up the cause, yield our principles, belie our profession, in order to have peace? Sir, I prefer something besides peace at such a price! And I hope the day is far distant when we will consent to hear peace at such a price.

There is not a word in that report that expresses suspicion of Bro. Hibbard. Nor is it necessary that he be impeached. Some suppose that there is no cause of complaint unless he prove to be a pro-slavery man. But it is not so. It is the principle involved in the appointment and not the man they send.

I am sorry to say that large societies in my own Conference, the Oneida, are hanging in the balance undetermined,

discouraged, and almost shattered by the blow given to their confidence and their hopes. Is the Northern under its present auspices the paper to conciliate their feelings? If we would prevent secession we must show the people that we resent and resist this outrage upon our rights. I intend no secession, yet I hear of its being threatened in many places, and would prevent it.

W. H. Pearne asked Br. Davis to name the societies.

L. D. Davis—"I am not here to be questioned or cross-examined."

W. Hunt spoke of the flood of excitement in the Church on the slavery question. A breakwater was necessary.—That breakwater the General Conference had put up. He was thankful for the check given to the excitement by the change of editors. It would be of great service to the Church. He believed in being loyal to the Church, and recognizing the authority of every officer of the General Conference. He showed how this would operate disastrously if the principle was carried out. It would repudiate the bishop, the presiding elder, the pastor, the class-leader, if we were satisfied, and did not get our choice. It was revolutionary.

As to the conceded rights talked about, it was only a gracious act of the Conference to allow such a privilege. Gracious acts were not required by justice, and could be withheld without innovating on rights. "I hold," said he, "that we ought to be more than satisfied with the doings of the General Conference for giving us so good an editor."

They speak of the paper stopping. I can point to those who will stop it if the present editor had been continued.—"I go for the Church as it is." If I believed it was pro-slavery I would leave it. If factious feelings have been generated, and these men among us are the victims of southern faction, it serves them right. They now eat the fruit of their own doings.

Kirkendall repudiated all idea of being cool, or keeping cool. "I am not cool—I feel aroused—I favor excitement," said he. Referring to Mr. Hibbard he declared that he "sat here like a mule determined not to move. Yet that one man has the power to allay all excitement. But he won't do it. If the Church goes to the Devil he'll go on. He won't do a thing to stop the excitement. We are called on

to make all quiet. We can't do it. He can. And let the man who can do it, do it" Mr. K. was excessive in his indignation, but a hoarseness prevented him from speaking a great while.

I. L. Hunt opposed the resolution. He denied that Mr. Hibbard was "put upon" them. Dr. Bowen declared that he was elected by Northern votes. And none of you denied it. (Mattison: We did not believe it though for all that.)

Dr. Bowen here repeated his remark about the nomination of an editor for the *Christian Advocate*.

Prof. Mattison declared that no formal nomination was made. An informal ballot only was had.

W. H. Pearne insisted that their action in the northern caucus resigned the right, if it existed of local nominations. They broke down the bars themselves.

I. L. Hunt resumed, and concluded by saying "I go for the man that the General Conference has appointed."

It was moved by D. A. Whedon that the first resolution lie on the table. Not carried. It was then adopted by a very large hand vote. Many voted against it. Intense feeling was shown.

The second resolution was adopted without debate.

It was moved to adopt the third.

Dr. Bowen said, that with his views of Methodist economy Brother Hibbard had no right to resign. His ordination vows bound him to do such work, and at such times as the Church judged best. Anti-slavery to the core, as he was, he was not anti-Methodistic. Referring to the Wesleyan secession, he said he went with the anti-slavery brethren until they went against the Church. Then he drew back.—Hibbard could not resign, he repeated. The vows of the Lord were upon him. If he left his post, he forfeited his ministerial character.

Prof. Mattison read the Discipline to show that an editor might resign—that provision was made for filling a vacancy occasioned by "death, resignation or otherwise."

Dr. Bowen said that "resignation contemplated indisposition."

W. H. Pearne doubted the equity of such action. We, by adopting this resolution sit in judgment on the conscience of Br. Hibbard. He says he cannot conscientiously

resign. We say he must, whether his conscience approves it or not.

Prof. Mattison denied—he read the resolution, “it is our conviction that the peace of the Church,” &c.

I. L. Hunt said, “I will not raise my hand to say that any man ought to do what he says he cannot conscientiously do—nor, that it is “my conviction” that he should !

D. A. Whedon disclaimed fogysm—was indignant—denounced the action of the border and middle men, but advised them to pause. They did not represent the brethren fully. One hundred preachers now in the city, are not here. It is a late hour. We are an irresponsible convention. The editor is not responsible to us nor to any of these conferences. He will not resign—that is fixed. Then follows the dread alternative. Peace does not require this. Peace will be destroyed by it. The Church will suffer. The preachers would suffer among themselves in loss of confidence. They were suffering. His heart had been pained to have the charge against brethren of having sold out to Baltimore and the Devil. He advised that the periodical arrangement be submitted to. Let us go home and preach an anti-slavery gospel—Bible doctrine, in a proper tone—style—(“To suit Baltimore,” said one.) Not such as Baltimore likes, but as you judge best. Let us try the new editor any how. We may find that the Baltimoreans have caught a tartar.

Mr. Ives. They talk to us about excitement. That, is on the other side. I never saw Br. Whedon so excited in my life. Mr. Ives went in for decisive, pointed, powerful action. He repulsed all advice to submit, and declared they would prove themselves a lot of curs and ninnies if they bowed down tamely

As it was now twelve o'clock midnight, some wished to adjourn. But the many said “no,” “no,” “no.”

Dr. Tefft rose to speak if they did not adjourn.

Dr. Park—How long do you feel Doctor.

Dr. Tefft. As long as the subject requires. After some delay he proceeded. The only point to which he asked attention was that the election of F. G. Hibbard was legitimate, by Conference rightfully done. (No sir. No sir, said several.) I will not be no sired down. I repeat the election was legitimate—done by a majority. The argument in favor of claiming as a right local nominations, he showed to

be fallacious. It would require them to repudiate the election of Bishop Janes at 1844. The North nominated Peck. The South Janes. Did we because a northern man with a southern heart was put upon us for Bishop repudiate? He made a good bishop. So may Bro. Hibbard make a good editor.

In 1848 Abel Stevens was put in nomination for the editorship of *The Christian Advocate* of New York. Geo. Peck was the nominee of the patronizing Conferences. But we wanted Stevens and gave their local nomination the go by. And we elected him. The Baltimoreans threatened to get up a Baltimore paper. Dr. Bond consented to edit it. Brother Stevens got scared and timid as a hare at the smell of powder, started off full trot and hid himself. Over his election Bro. Hosmer and I grew fat. Now the border men have played the same game with you. There is a difference however between skinning and being skinned. You find it so.

Dr. Tefft then proceeded to oppose the doctrine of right to any such local course in church matters. There was no warrant for it in the constitution of the church, and no analogy for it in the practices of the body.

Subsequently the Doctor became highly excited and talked in a loose style, and very severe manner, saying what was extravagant and even foolish, submitting at last to be called to order.

Dr. Parks threatened to reply to him in a manner that would make his ear tingle. Dr. T. promised him that two could play at that game.

The discussion after this period, under the evil inspiration of Dr. Tefft's speech degenerated into bitter retort and biting sarcasm. There were brilliant passages uttered and keen flashing blades wielded; but it would not improve the general reputation, nor confirm the claims to Christian character of some of the speakers, to be reported *et literatim* and the reporter forbears.

The resolutions were finally adopted by less than a hundred votes after 1 o'clock midnight.

## THE BISHOPS ON SLAVERY,

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In compliance with the request of the Troy, Erie, North Ohio, and Wisconsin conference, different resolutions asking a change in the General Rule on slavery were laid before all the Annual Conferences for their concurrence. The result will be found by inspection of the journals, but we believe, no one of these resolutions received the constitutional majority of the members of the annual conferences. In view of this fact the questions may arise whether this body has authority to change the Discipline upon this subject so as to affect membership in the church. We are aware that it is difficult to separate the consideration of the desirableness of any measure from its constitutionality, and especially so where deep feeling on the subject may exist. Yet we think it to be our duty to express our strong doubts whether in view of the restricted power of a delegated general conference, any measure equivalent to a change in the general rules can be constitutionally adopted without the concurrence of the annual conferences. As to the propriety of any modifications not of such a character as to conflict with the constitutional economy of the church, while opinions and views may be various, we can fully confide in the wisdom of this General Conference as the supreme council of the church.

In our administration in the territory where slavery exists we have been careful not to transcend in any instance, or in any respect what we understood to be the will and direction of the General Conferences. That body having retained its jurisdiction over conferences previously existing in such territory, and having directed the organization of additional conferences, it became our duty to arrange the district circuits and stations, and to superintend them as an integral part of the church. As the result we have six annual conferences which are wholly or in part in slave territory. These conferences have a white church membership including probationers, of more than 143,000 with the attendants upon our ministry, making a probable population of between five and six hundred thousand. They have colored church membership, including probationers, of more than 28,000, with the attendants upon our ministry making a probable population of upwards of a thousand. A portion of this population are slaves. The others are mostly poor. They are generally strongly attached to the church of their choice and look to it confidently for ministerial

services, religious sympathy, and all the offices of christian kindness. The white membership in these conferences in respect to intelligence, piety and attachment to Methodist discipline and economy, will compare favorably with other portions of the church.

In our judgment the existence of these conferences and churches under their present circumstances does not tend to extend or perpetuate slavery. They are known to be organized under a discipline which characterizes slavery as a great evil ; which makes the slave holder ineligible to any official station in the church where the laws of the State in which he lives will admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom ; which disfranchises a traveling ministry who by any means becomes the owner of a slave or slaves, unless he executes, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the State wherein he lives ; which makes it the duty of all ministers to enforce upon all the members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the word of God, and allowing them time to attend upon the public worship of God on our regular days of divine service ; which prohibits the buying and selling of men women and children with an intention to enslave them, and inquires what shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery.

With this discipline freely circulated among the people, or certainly within the reach of any who desire to examine it, and with other churches existing in the same territory without these enactments, these societies and conferences have either by elective affinity adhered to or from preferences associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church. In a few instances their church relation have exposed them to some peril and in numerous cases to sacrifices. But such have been their moral worth, and Christian excellence, and prudent conduct that generally they have been permitted to enjoy their religious immunities and serve and worship God according to their consciences.

And now brethren, in conclusion will you suffer the word of exhortation. We have long regretted two things connected with the General Conference proceedings, viz : needless loss of time in the early part of the session, and too much haste towards its termination. We trust that on this occasion both will be avoided ; that the conference will enter upon its duties promptly, and that every member will patiently remain at his post until every part of it is duly considered and regularly disposed of. We trust your deliberations will be characterized by fraternal courtesy and a devotional spirit. May the Spirit of all grace descend upon you and upon the whole church through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

B. WAUGH.  
T. A. MORRIS.  
E. S. JAMES.  
L. SCOTT.  
M. SIMPSON.  
O. C. BAKER.  
E. R. AMES.

Indianapolis, May 3, 1856.

## "THE PASTORAL ADDRESS ON SLAVERY."

### AN EXTRACT.

"During the present session of the General Conference, many subjects, some of them involving great, if not radical changes, have been under consideration. Petitions and memorials, from almost every part of our extended work, have been presented and referred to appropriate committees, where they have received respectful consideration. This has been especially the case upon the subject of Slavery.

The position of our church from the beginning has been that of an anti-slavery church; and in both slave and free States this is our present attitude. So we are regarded by pro-slavery men, as the persecution of our ministers in some parts of our work, and the apparent necessity of changing the seat of one of our Conferences, in order to avoid the notified violence of a mob, clearly prove. The subject has been largely discussed in our periodicals, patiently considered in the committee on Slavery, and has occupied a large portion of the time of the General Conference, where it has been debated as you have seen, with eminent ability and the greatest freedom.—With its action upon this subject, you are already acquainted. The debates brought out fully the fact, that none of the members of this General Conference entertained pro-slavery sentiments, exists in the church.—And the effect of such action upon the interests of the border conferences probably alone prevented a constitutional majority from voting to recommend a change of our general rule on the subject of Slavery. On this subject be temperate but firm; resisting evil not with carnal weapons, but with immutable truths—"weapons that are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds,"

And now, beloved brethren, will you suffer us to exhort you to prompt and vigorous co-operation with your ministers, in carrying forward the work of God committed to us. "Ye are workers together with him." To this high dignity and honorable distinction in the presence of God, and "a great cloud of witnesses," is every christian called. And if we "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance," it is that we may present you before Christ, 'holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight.'

Signed by the Bishops and

W. S. HARRIS,

Sec'y Gen. Conf:

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